

THE
MONTH

JULY 1958

A PENITENTIAL PILGRIMAGE

ERIC COLLEDGE

ISLAND IN TRAVAIL

The Maltese Situation

PAUL CRANE

THE IRISH DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

GEOFFREY ASHE

RECUSANT FINES IN ESSEX, 1583-1593

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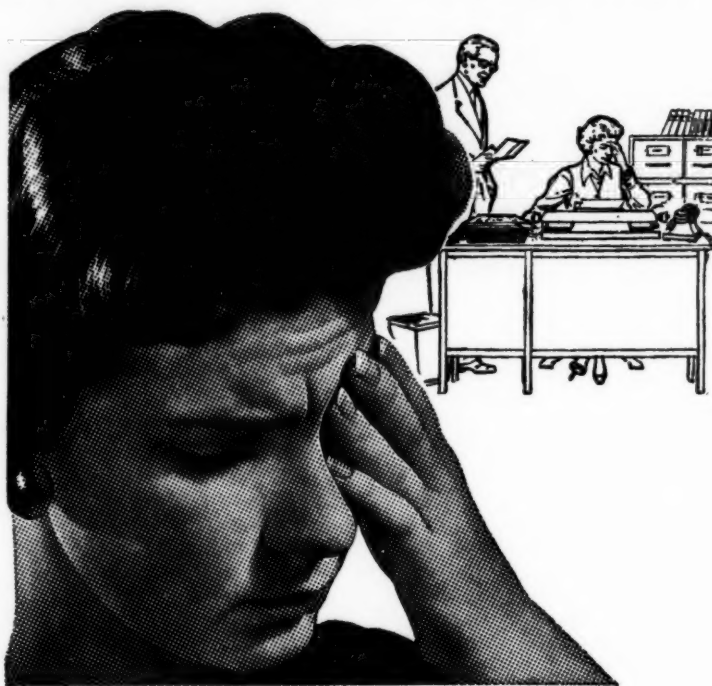
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God's Presence



WE may be sorry that so little is said about flowers in the Scriptures save to insist that they fade so fast. But our Lord (Mt. 6 : 28; Lk. 12 : 27), teaching us to rely on God, mentions first the birds whom *He* feeds, though their place in the scale of nature is so much lower than man's; and then tells us to 'study closely' (a very strong word in Greek) the wild flowers, and instead of saying briefly that God nourishes them too, breaks off in a little ecstasy of delight at their beauty, and cries out: 'I say to you, that not Solomon, all in his glory, was arrayed like one of these!'

That is enough to prove that our Lord felt intensely about colour, translucency, form, texture—all the delicate constituents of the humblest flower. But his point is, that '*God* thus clothes them!' The First Cause, God, is always at work in all things.

Trees play a great part in the Scriptures, 'all the trees of the woods shall exult before the Lord, for He is come!' (Ps. 95 : 12): in Isaia 55 : 12 they clap their hands at His advent; in 44 : 24 the mountain forests break out into shouts of joy. To hear the

wind rushing through a vast fir-forest, is to hear the roar of a multitude praising God; and the first incandescent haze of spring—bronze, and pink, then green—and the gold and orange and crimson of autumn are an orchestra to His glory.

And the tree has its history! The Tree of Paradise was lovely till Sin took hold of it. But, the legend tells, God marked forthwith its wood so that at last from that tree should grow the tree which should redeem the ruin that the first had caused: '*Ipse lignum tunc notavit damna ut ligni solveret*'; and 'that he who by the tree had conquered, by the Tree might be defeated' (Preface for the Cross).

And finally, the Grove of Life on the hill of the New Jerusalem (Apoc. 22 : 2). It rose green upon the terraces of the Mountain-City—the Christian People, full of grace, *vegetati*, given sap and springing vitality by the downward-pouring Spirit. Thus is the soul led to 'the lawns of Thy Paradise for ever green' and rests by the waters of refreshment that go not only through the forests in great waterfalls—but softly, through wide pastures.

FR C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.

The above contribution from Father Martindale is one of a series of commentaries on the Scriptures appearing every week in

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The Recovery of Unity

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"We are coming to realise more and more that the objective break-up of Christendom at the Reformation was but a translation into fact of the subjective breakdown of the medieval Catholic mind, in which the single Catholic vision was parcelled out in nominalism, pietism, ritualism, and legalism. Dr. Mascall's thesis is that this realisation (and to acquire it involves years of steady and open-minded thought) can make a larger and more long-term contribution to the recovery of unity than particular doctrinal debate, the latter too often based, on both sides, on medieval rather than on Catholic assumptions. The thesis is true, and **we should be grateful to Dr. Mascall for his exposition of it.** It should be appreciated more than it is in Catholic circles." . . . *The Tablet*.

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LONGMANS

A PENITENTIAL PILGRIMAGE

By

ERIC COLLEDGE

IN *The Seventh Seal*, a new Swedish film recently shown in London, we are presented with a familiar view of medieval life, characteristically Germanic and Protestant, in recent years much publicised through the success which the Dutch historian Huizinga's book, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, has enjoyed. The concept of "merrie England" has received at least its fair share of ridicule: in this film, however, the makers have assembled every circumstance of horror which they could find in the art and the annals of the late Middle Ages, to create for us a ghastly Sweden, a world in which life is but an endless dance of death, where squalor and disease have no palliative except lust and superstition, as crafty priests prey upon credulous peasants while the knights look on in frigid, cynical despair. One of the most memorable episodes in this macabre composition is when the wandering players are interrupted in their performance by a procession of flagellants proclaiming the dreaded advent of the plague and calling the people to repentance.

Much careful research has been spent on this scene, as on the whole film. One or two of its minor details seem improbable or wrong: the chanting of the *Dies irae* in Latin in which all the villagers join is one—some of the vernacular hymns, French, Italian, German and Dutch, made for and sung by the Flagellants are preserved, both words and music¹—and the highly picturesque figure who stands out among the Brueghelesque freaks who follow the Cross, a young woman crawling on her knees, clad in sackcloth and crowned with thorns, seems to be derived from a much later chapter in the history of pietistic nonsense. The only precedent known to the present writer is the story of the volatile Princesse de Belgiojoso appearing at the opera in Brussels

¹ Leroux de Lincy: *Recueil de chants historiques français* (Paris, 1841, I, 237-242); Paul Runge: *Die Lieder u. Melodien der Geissler des Jahres 1349* (Leipzig, 1900).

so adorned when the religious revival of the 1830's was at its height.

These, however, are trifling points, and there will be few who will not concede that an artist seeking to convey the fanatical, morbid and irrational tendencies in medieval European religious life may with propriety use the surviving records of the Flagellants for his purposes. Yet we do well to keep open minds, and the purpose of this note is to contrast what is already known and accepted as coming from reputable sources about this extraordinary manifestation¹ with a newly published account of a Flagellant procession by one who in fact took part in it, an account which may give readers second thoughts.

Perhaps the best report by an eyewitness is that by Giles le Muisit, abbot of the Benedictine house of St. Martin at Tournai,² who had many of the qualities of a first-rate journalist, knowing how to collate significant details and understanding their future value. As in other of his surviving works, he has gone to great pains to furnish his chronicle of Tournai with accurate illustrations, and since Martène and Durand in 1724 first reproduced the picture of the hooded, half-naked penitents, preceded by the Cross and a banner of the Passion, scourging themselves as they walk, it has been used by very many authors, as have also those two other miniatures in Giles's manuscript (now No. 13076-7 in the Royal Library at Brussels) which accompany his narrative of the outbreaks of pogroms in the Netherlands shortly before 1349, and of the hurried mass burials of those who perished of the Black Death. By significant contrast, two further pictures, showing Giles's successful operation for cataract, are virtually unknown.³

A modern reader will feel deep repulsion when he reads Giles's heartless, indifferent story of the massacres of Jews; but he saw, it is clear, a connection between these events and the arrival of the Flagellants, although it is hard to say whether he himself was satisfied by the strange piece of rationalisation which he produced, the story of the prophecy that the coming of men

¹ An excellent summary of these sources, and of their treatment by the German scholar Haupt, is in the article *Flagellants* in the Catholic Encyclopaedia.

² Ed. Henri Lemaître: *Chronique et annales de Gilles le Muisit* (Paris, 1906).

³ For recent reproductions of these miniatures, see Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache, trans. Hilda Graef: *Master Eckhart and the Rhineland Mystics* (London, 1957), and Norman Cohn: *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London, 1957).

robed in white and bearing red crosses on their garments would be heralded by such pogroms, a prophecy circulated by the Jews, who so foretold and invited their own destruction. "Justice was done": these, alas, are the words not of a Josef Goebbels, but of a Christian, a priest and a religious. But at least he brings the same detachment to the rest of his narrative; and it is plain that he knew that in times to come his testimony to these strange events would be of use to historians. He tries to be impartial; when he describes the first appearance, in August 1349, of the Flagellants in Tournai, a company of some two hundred from Bruges, he dryly remarks "There was disagreement about them, because some who were of healthy mind did not approve of them, whereas others greatly praised them." He, a Benedictine, must have derived entertainment from the next incidents which he recounts; when a public exercise of the Flagellants was organised, a local Franciscan preached on the vices of the times and on the plague, but ostentatiously ignored the occasion, causing thereby much popular indignation. By now similar bands were arriving from other cities, and one company from Liège was led by a Dominican who obtained leave to preach, who violently denounced the religious who were unfavourable to the Flagellants, and who made extravagant claims for their merits. (Though Giles does not say so, the Dominican evidently was advertising the letter, said to have fallen from heaven upon Jerusalem, in which Christ revealed that since His own blood was shed upon Calvary no better act for the propitiation of the sins of mankind than the exercises of the Flagellants had been performed. The proclamation of this "Celestial Epistle" commonly accompanied such exercises.) Then, next, a local Augustinian friar was commissioned to preach, and to contradict some of the Dominican's more scandalous remarks, but the citizens of Tournai shouted him down. It was in deference to popular sentiment that in September the first company of Tournai penitents was founded. It is not necessary here to enumerate Giles's detailed description of their organisation, although it is noteworthy that it agrees with other evidence, down to the smallest details, such as his remarks about the way in which their vernacular hymns were so composed that they required the singers to prostrate themselves three times. What is important is the balance of his final judgment: he speaks of

the astonishing improvement in the demeanour of the citizens, and especially praises the way in which such penitential exercises were able to bring quarrels and feuds to a peaceful end; but, none the less, he remarks upon the "seditious" effects on the people, and, very shrewdly, upon the general surprise and disillusionment which followed the discovery that the whole movement had no official ecclesiastical support. Indeed, he gives us to understand that although in the late autumn the civic authorities revoked their licence and put an end to the processions, the papal bull of 20 October was not published, for fear of provoking further tumult.

Some of the companies which Giles had watched, marching and singing and whipping themselves in the market square or in the courtyard before his own house, came over the narrow seas to London. Robert of Avesbury says that the bands who arrived in England late in 1349 had come from Zeeland and Holland by way of Flanders. They seem here to have been treated with that indulgent neglect which, until the days of the Lollards, was the lot of religious enthusiasts in this country; and in any case, as Thomas Walsingham points out, their arrival was quickly followed by the papal prohibitions, addressed, among other countries, specifically to England, which put an end to their mission here.¹

A comparison of the chronicles by Giles and Walsingham produces one point of importance. The Black Death had travelled to England faster than the Dutch flagellants: and Walsingham deduces from the order of events in this country that it was the advent of the plague which occasioned these penitential demonstrations. This view, commonly expressed by later historians, although challenged by Haupt, is not shared by Giles, who simply tells what he saw, that first there was a general massacre of Jews, that then the Flagellants came, and that they in their turn were followed by a pestilence the like of which had never been known. It is only after the first and worst ravages of this new plague in Western Europe that we find that any fresh outbreak will be the signal for the revival of the processions of penitents, especially in those territories where, in spite of the

¹ *Robertus de Avesbury de Gestis Mirabilibus Regis Edwardi Tertii* (Chronicles and Memorials, 1889), pp. 407, 408: *Thomae Walsingham Historia Anglicana* (ibid., 1863), p. 275.

disapproval of the Holy See, they had formed themselves into religious confraternities organised on a permanent footing. This is to be seen most clearly in Northern Italy, where, perhaps, their persistence is one of the many ways which "God's people," *il popolo di Dio*, found to show their resistance to an authority which they had come to hate as alien alike to religion and patriotism.¹ The year 1399 saw a new attack of the epidemic and a revival of the processions of penitents, known in Italy from their robes as *I Bianchi*. The authorities so far away as England were warned that they were on the move again, and were on no account this time to be admitted.²

By this time, as the surviving records plainly show, the Flagellant movement had everywhere acquired the reputation which it still today enjoys, as one of the grosser manifestations of an anarchical and fanatical religious enthusiasm, calculated to disrupt good order both civil and ecclesiastical. We need not doubt that this was true of many of the wandering penitents: but what is probably the only account of one of their exercises written not by a bystander such as Abbot Giles but by a participant comes from a man less given than most to "enthusiasm" of any kind, the "Merchant of Prato," Francesco di Marco Datini. The Marchesa Origo in her recent study of the vast collection of documents, left by Datini and still today intact, has described the man and his times with such knowledge and judgment that her work claims our attention as one of the most arresting and faithful studies of life in late medieval Europe to have appeared in this generation: and her picture of Datini is as vivid and living as if he had sat to a Quentin Matsys or a Jan van Eyck. Cupidity and ostentation, gambler's recklessness and craven's terrors, worldly indifference and pious aspirations, a whole psychomachia plays itself out in his life, no single act of which seems to have been inspired by a single motive; yet it is this man, the very incarnation of the solid citizen, careful that his every deed and his every penny should be invested in his good standing in this

¹ On the emergence, especially in Florence, of such organised anti-papal and proletarian sentiment, see Iris Origo: *The Merchant of Prato* (London, 1957), pp. 50-1, 80, 348. Chapter Eight, "Plague and Penitence," contains Datini's own narrative of his pilgrimage and a valuable account of other contemporary Italian sources for Flagellant history.

² See the present writer's Introduction to *The Chastising of God's Children* (Oxford, 1957), p. 51.

world and the next, who on 18 August 1399 joined a company of flagellants and went on pilgrimage with them. The plague was threatening Florence, and more than thirty thousand penitents went on foot to Arezzo and back. Their exercise differed in a few minor details from earlier ones: they afflicted themselves with rods, not the usual leaded scourges, and they were on foot for only nine days instead of the traditional thirty-three; but in most respects what Datini tells us of his own experiences accords closely with other sources. They were forbidden to eat meat, to take off their white robes or to sleep in a bed. None the less, Datini took two horses and a mule equipped with many luxuries not forbidden. They were led by a great crucifix, they carried lights, and as they whipped themselves they publicly confessed their sins. They received popular acclaim and much hospitality as they went: and we know of another pilgrimage which Datini joined, made not from Florence, his business headquarters, but from his native city of Prato, that it was outstandingly successful in its work of reconciliation. All this is just as Giles had described it in the Low Countries half a century before: and, most important of all, we can see that the city fathers in Florence had taken the same necessary precautions, putting men of known worth such as Datini at the head of the procession, and seeing to it that they had also respectable spiritual leaders. Whoever might originate such a local movement (and once again we find the Dominicans active, in Florence in the person of Giovanni Dominici, who, the Marchesa points out, had already been expelled from Venice for encouraging and organising the *Bianchi*), its good order would be guaranteed if it were led by trustworthy local clergy; and the August pilgrimage from Florence had for "our father and guide and chief leader" the Bishop of Fiesole himself. Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the imagined scenes of demented uproar which have grown so dear to later ages and the real atmosphere of this excursion as Datini tells of it. He and his companions began by going to Santa Maria Novella and receiving Holy Communion, they regularly heard Mass and listened to sermons on the way, and, when they had reached Florence and their own homes again, they did not end their pilgrimage until the Cross had reached Fiesole and they had all taken part in a great open air Mass said by the bishop outside his cathedral, when he preached to them and blessed them all.

Out of a multitude of fragments, receipts and letters, invoices and memoranda, the droppings of a lifetime so rarely preserved, the Marchesa Origo has assembled a portrait of an ordinary man, a wayfarer, neither hot nor cold, a man in whom we may recognise ourselves as we seldom can in the procession of the famous and the infamous of whom the history books usually treat. Historians with many different views of life have found in the chronicles of the Flagellants illustrative material for their theses, and have claimed them, sometimes as forerunners of Protestant reform, sometimes as representative of the most mawkish and ignoble tendencies in orthodox piety, sometimes as chiliasts, trembling and rejoicing at an imminent Second Coming, sometimes as mere sexual perverts. It may be that each of these viewpoints has some claim to truth; and yet Datini was none of these things, but a level-headed, hard-hearted, tight-fisted man of affairs, who went on his penitential journey in the same spirit as he heads his bills of lading—"In the name of God, to a safe passage." One wishes that for every one whose ideas of medieval life have been coloured by such sensational works of fiction as *The Seventh Seal*, there might be a hundred to read the sober truths of *The Merchant of Prato*.

ISLAND IN TRAVAIL

The Maltese Situation

By

PAUL CRANE

MAGNAE ET INVICTAE Britanniae Melitensium Amor et Europea Vox Has Insulas Confirmat A.D. 1814.¹
 These words stand carved in stone over the main Guard in Valetta. They bring a lump to the throat. They were placed there to commemorate a pact freely entered into between two free peoples one hundred and forty-four years ago. In

¹The affection of the Maltese people and the voice of Europe confide these Islands to the care of great and invincible Britain.

1798 Napoleon seized the Island of Malta on his way to Egypt. Four years later the Maltese people rose against the tyrant, ousted his forces, appealed to the King of England for protection and declared their accession to the British Empire. Though an island of obvious strategic importance, it took Great Britain twelve years to accede to the Maltese request. Finally, she did so. The accession of Malta to the Empire was confirmed at the Treaty of Amiens in 1814 and the accord entered into between the two countries was recorded in the words which open this article. They show how wrong is the twist of those who write so superficially, as one did recently, that "the British took it [Malta] from the French and have governed it since 1814." The British did nothing of the sort. They acceded to the request of a brave, highly-civilised and Catholic people, possessed of an ancient culture, to link their destiny with that of the United Kingdom. The bond has held for one hundred and forty-four years. It has been tested in the fire of two great wars. None who know the island's story in the second could have any doubt as to the strength of the affection which linked the Maltese people in freedom with ourselves. They remained unbroken and faithful through the near-starvation of an appalling siege. No George Cross was better earned than that which His Majesty, King George VI, conferred upon their island. One felt, at the war's end, that, having been through so much together, the two peoples would never be parted. Yet, the recent past has turned Malta into an island of tensions. It has become what is popularly known as a potential "trouble spot." At the moment of writing it is without a government of its own and, to put it mildly, official relationships with Britain are strained. Why is this so?

At bottom, I would suggest, geography has a great deal to do with it. So, too, has economics. Malta is a bare island of rock covered thinly with soil and densely populated by 300,000 people. It has no minerals; its soil is poor; it lacks an adequate supply of fresh water. Its one priceless asset is its magnificent harbour, which combined until recently with its geographical position to make Malta, in the days when sea-power counted, of first-class strategic importance to this country. The dockyard is all to the Maltese. It is the hub of their economic life. Without it, they could not continue to exist in their present numbers on their island. Until recently, Britain's strategic need of Malta

was great and the Maltese fulfilment of that need satisfied the essential core of their economic requirements. The two countries got along together on a basis of reciprocity. There were quarrels, as there always are between friends; but the recognition of mutual need was there to tie the two together. And there was an affection also, which grew slow and sure between the two peoples.

Now, all has changed. The decline of British power, particularly in the Middle East, has combined with the coming of the nuclear age to reduce Britain's naval might to a fraction of its former strength, and to make questionable even the suitability and so the retention of Malta as a N.A.T.O. naval base. Strategically, the island has lost its importance, which means that its livelihood is endangered. Overnight, as it seems, what would be considered a trump card in the hand of any Maltese Government, has vanished into thin air. A people justly proud of a livelihood earned through service finely rendered has seen placed in sudden jeopardy the working core of its economic life. We, in this country, should be the last to feel surprise at any vexatious outburst consequent on so sharp and so tragic a discovery. Under similar circumstances, we would be the first to feel angry and violent ourselves.

On one reckoning, therefore, the major problem underlying the present trouble between Britain and Malta is largely economic. At base, its solution must be seen in terms of so reorientating the life and economy of Malta's dockyard that its capacity and the great skill of its workers are employed to the full in the service of civilian as well as diminished naval need. The objective must be to turn the island into a great shipbuilding and repairing centre. Every other economic measure, including emigration, which will always remain necessary to a certain extent, must be seen as ancillary to the essential task of shaping the economy of the dockyard to suit civilian need.

To accomplish it two things are necessary—capital and goodwill resting on a basis of mutual trust. The former should not be difficult to find (this country should give most generously and there is more capital in some Maltese hands than most people think); but it depends very largely on the latter and that has been bedevilled during recent years by the strangely capricious behaviour of Mr. Mintoff and his government.

Until recently—and during the greater part of his negotiations with this country—the Maltese dockyard was considered by Britain a most valuable strategic asset and the political integration of the two countries essential on that account. Knowing this, Mr. Mintoff persisted in holding a gun at Britain's head in order to extort from this country the highest possible price for the great harbour and base which political integration would place safely for all time in Britain's hands. From the angle of a great section of informed opinion in Malta, integration was of doubtful value to the island on many counts, of which, obviously, the religious was the most important. Be that as it may, had integration been won by Mr. Mintoff's methods and in the face of the great slice of Maltese opinion which was opposed to such a solution of the island's difficulties, I think there can be no doubt but that the ensuing political union between Malta and the United Kingdom would have been as uneasy in all probability as many another shotgun marriage.

And the unease would have come not only as the inevitable aftermath of Mr. Mintoff's acrimonious methods of negotiation with the British Government over this whole matter of integration. It would have been due at base to Mr. Mintoff's tendency whilst in office to ride roughshod over the just claims of his political opponents and to disregard those of the Catholic Church. Integration or no integration, Mr. Mintoff's treatment of Church and Opposition has left a legacy of bitterness and bad blood in Malta, which will not be forgotten in a hurry and for the creation of which he must bear the major responsibility.

Of the treatment meted out to his political opponents by Mr. Mintoff and his followers I will content myself with the understatement that it was not pretty. Observers in this country, who have looked at Malta with an objective eye during recent years—and there are precious few of them—will know exactly what I mean. A commission of enquiry into the whole extraordinarily unpleasant performance would yield extremely interesting results. For that performance, Mr. Mintoff's friends on the Left in this country, together with certain of their countrymen, resident in Malta at the time in an official and unofficial capacity, must take a very large share of blame. At the very least, they stand in the position of accessories to the fact of the treatment he meted out and they should be thoroughly ashamed of them-

selves. They have done almost irreparable harm to the good relations which should prevail between the Maltese people and ourselves. It is time these countrymen of mine were informed that what passes in certain uncouth English circles for "bold radicalism" is, in fact, mere bad manners, which becomes particularly nauseating when set at the service of political manoeuvre. My friends in Malta, thank God, will know that these types are not truly representative of the English people with whom they have stood so close for almost a hundred and fifty years.

The Catholic Church in Malta has come in for the worst treatment of all; and she has received scant sympathy in this country from those possessed of the *New Statesman* mentality, which was so quick to interpret the clash between Church and State in Malta as one more typical example of a "reactionary" and "feudal" Archbishop refusing to yield to the "forces of progress." That kind of nonsense had and has all too many believers over here, and with sorrow one noticed at the time that there were certain English Catholics who were not far from it themselves. In reality, the history of Mintoff's clash with the Church in Malta was not as portrayed in the press.

Standing guard, as was his duty, over the Catholic traditions of his Catholic people, His Grace Archbishop Sir Michael Gonzi was bound to seek, as a precondition of political integration, written guarantees, which would ensure the continuance of the Catholic Church's historic and predominant position in the life of Catholic Malta. As a corollary, he was likewise bound, at the time of the referendum on integration in February 1956, to point to the dangers of voting for such an arrangement unaccompanied by written guarantees with regard to the position of the Catholic Church on the island. "If we had the guarantees," he said in a broadcast at the time, "we would have been able to tell you that from the religious aspect there is nothing against integration. As things stand at present, we cannot tell you this."

Those words were spoken with dignified moderation by the leader of a Catholic people. Very shamefully, they were made to serve as the occasion for a series of anti-clerical outbursts, which came all the more cruelly when made to carry the implication that the Archbishop opposed integration because he was anti-working-class. The Mintoffian following in the Maltese dockyard is considerable and many there regard him, in ignorance,

as an economic saviour. Mr. Mintoff's party, which until recently supported political integration with Britain, is the workers' party in Malta. Consequently, it was not difficult for his followers to be made to believe quite wrongly that, because the Archbishop had warned against integration without guarantees, he was opposed to that rise in working-class standards, which many hoped that political integration would bring in its train. Mr. Mintoff identified integration with the cause of the workers. Those who opposed it were branded, in consequence, as enemies of the working-class. The illogicality is patent, but, then, logic makes no appeal to a demagogue. Hitler had none. Mussolini had none. Nasser has none. Hitler told his people to think with their blood. There is no logic in that; but the Germans loved it. It was the simplest thing in the world for Mr. Mintoff's followers to imply that the Archbishop was anti-working-class.

His Grace, of course, was not anti-working-class. He was for the Church, and the Church is for all men irrespective of class. In taking his stand on integration, Sir Michael Gonzi was only doing what the Church everywhere, at one time or another, is always having to do. As shepherd of his flock, the Archbishop of Malta was telling his people that they must take more care of their souls than of their bodies; and that it would profit them nothing if they gained the whole glittering world which integration purported to give them and suffered thereby a weakening of their Faith and the possible loss of their souls. His had to be the hard message that to vote for integration without guarantees was to pay too high a price for the things of this world. He gave it with dignity and courage. After doing so, he remained patient under what can only be described as savage and utterly unwarranted abuse and provocation. At times, the Archbishop of Malta must have felt terribly alone and isolated in the stand he took over integration. For taking it and for showing himself thereby such a fine champion of the Church's rights and so of his people's best interests, future generations of Maltese will come to bless his memory. And those in this country who at least value fair play or who go well beyond that to a recognition of the necessary predominance of the spiritual in public life, will come to recognise in the person of Malta's Archbishop a defender of everything in which they believe.

From the above it should be clear that it was not only or

mainly the sudden depreciation of the strategic value of Malta's dockyard that deprived Mr. Mintoff of his bargaining power, so losing him his chance of integration. He lost it primarily through his foolishness in seeking it without due regard for the legitimate interests of the Catholic Church, which, in a very special way, are also those of the Maltese people themselves. It is no exaggeration at all to say that the future of their island depends on the ability of Malta's politicians and of the British Government to recognise this fundamental fact. On this recognition and on this recognition alone can there be built the goodwill which will heal the wanton scars of recent conflict and allow Britain and Malta together to build up once more in freedom the island economy of a proud and gallant Catholic people.

By way of postscript, I would add that the most recent picture of Malta I have seen is not of Mr. Mintoff's teddy boys running riot in the streets of Valetta. It is of His Excellency the Governor, Sir Robert Laycock and His Grace the Archbishop together at the opening of Luqua's new airport; two men for whom no one in his senses could have anything but the most profound esteem. Reflecting on that picture, I find myself convinced that the best hope of the island during this present difficult time lies in the close, hard-working co-operation which together they will surely give to the solution of its immediate problems.

THE IRISH DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

By

GEOFFREY ASHE

POSSIBLY the most surprising of the many assertions about King Arthur is that his realm included colonies in America. George Abbott, the Stuart geographer and archbishop, speaks of this as put forward in all good faith by his contemporaries, including "one of some speciall note." We might suspect a mere propagandist myth concocted as a retort to Spain, like the myth of the Welshman Madoc which Hakluyt preserves. But the belief had more in it than that. Behind the statement quoted by Abbott there was a background of genuine tradition regarding Celtic voyages, and, in particular, voyages by the monks of Ireland, who in Arthur's time—the sixth century—lived in close contact with Britain and its itinerant saints. The Irish claim to the discovery of America has in fact been urged several times and never quite refuted; H. G. Wells professed himself a tentative convert, and so did Mr. Charles Duff, a recent biographer of Columbus. But the argument has lain outside the main streams of research, and it may be pardonable to go over it once more, adding or rejecting where necessary.

Glastonbury Abbey, that Arthurian storehouse, is as good a place to start as any. The Abbey possessed several manuscripts of the life of an Irish monk known as "St. Brendan the Navigator." Brendan certainly existed: his most definite historical act was the foundation of the monastery of Clonfert, in Galway, about 558. He apparently cut a figure in the general coming and going of ecclesiastics about the British Isles, co-operating with Gildas and others of the generation trained by St. Illtud, and (according to a doubtful source) helping Arthur in his attempts to organise British resistance against the Saxons. He was an active seafarer, and undoubtedly sailed to the Hebrides like Columba. The question is whether he sailed farther, like Columbus.

It was in fact subsequently told of him that he had fared

westward in search of the Earthly Paradise or Land Promised to the Saints. Into the accounts of the quest went much Celtic dreaming about the regions beyond the sunset sea. St. Brendan's Voyage became an Irish Odyssey, popularised throughout Christendom by medieval adaptations. The Irish claim to have anticipated Viking and Spaniard rests mainly, though not entirely, on the idea that beneath the extravagances of the Brendan romance there is a substratum of truth.

The earliest Irish version of the saint's life is meagre. But it refers very circumstantially to two distinct voyages made by Brendan with parties of disciples, the first in a large curragh and the second in a wooden ship. The dates given or implied are 519 and 525, though the second is most uncertain and may be much too early. An enlarged version called the *Navigatio Sancti Brandani* may also, in some form, be tolerably ancient. It is much fuller but also more fantastic; it combines the two voyages and confuses the order of events. Adaptations and recensions add further details, perhaps not all fictitious.

Apart from purely magical scenes of the *Arabian Nights* order, the main episodes are as follows. I have rationalised their sequence.

1. St. Brendan and his companions, heading northward from Ireland, come to a rocky isle with no obvious landing-place. After sailing round it they discover a single cove where they go ashore.

2. They sail onwards to an island in northern seas where there are many sheep and a monastic community.

3. They wander back and forth in an archipelago, staying ashore for long periods.

4. They sail north to another island, a place of fire and smoke, where it looks as if a great number of smiths are at work on glowing metal. As they watch, the mass blazes and becomes molten.

5. After returning to a point previously visited, and obtaining advice, they sail west for forty days.

6. They are surrounded by darkness, which is said to be the prelude to arrival in the land they are seeking.

7. They come to a huge crystal pillar in the sea, with a canopy over it.

8. They reach an inhospitable coast where there are creatures with tusks and speckled bellies.

9. They sail into a semi-tropical region.

10. They put in at an island and are attacked by small dark savages.

11. They sail over transparent waters where they can see a long way down.

12. They disembark in the Promised Land, which is sunshiny and warm, and abounds in fruit. After forty days of exploration they reach a river. The land seems to stretch away indefinitely beyond, and they give up the attempt to find its limit. A celestial messenger tells them to go home; the country will be revealed to the world in God's good time.

Arranged thus without too much violence to the originals, the episodes do make sense, though very surprising sense. The monks visit St. Kilda (1), the Faroes (2), and the Shetlands (3). They sail—or are accidentally driven—to Iceland, witnessing an eruption of Hecla (4). A return to Ireland completes the first voyage. On the second voyage they cross the Atlantic (5) and run into a fog on the Newfoundland Banks (6). Somewhere in the western ocean they sight an iceberg drifting south with the Greenland current, and perhaps also a waterspout, the two being combined by subsequent yarn-spinners into a single phenomenon (7). They put in briefly at Newfoundland and encounter walruses (8); these animals used to come farther south. Then they make for a warmer zone and eventually enter the Bahamas (9, 10). Exploring the Caribbean fringes, they notice the famous transparent sea, still frequently observed (11). The Promised Land (12) is Florida or the Gulf coast, an area which has since inspired similar fancies, both in the time of Ponce de Leon and in that of Coolidge. If the celestial messenger is a real person he is probably an Indian medicine-man. Whether actively dissuaded or merely discouraged, Brendan gives the order to head for home.

Did these voyages happen? Could they have happened?

Arm-chair denials based on the inadequacy of boats or the difficulties of navigation may be dismissed at once. The maritime historians James Hornell and George A. Little have examined the boat question and agreed that even the curragh could have negotiated heavy seas, while the wooden ship, so far as it can be reconstructed, would have stood up to the crossing easily. As for navigation, it is true that Brendan and his contemporaries had no compasses, sextants, or chronometers. But people more primitive than they (the Polynesians, for instance) have crossed oceans

accurately. One method is to follow the flight of birds, on the correct assumption that they are not flying into absolute emptiness. A bird-track extends from Scotland at least to Iceland. And in fair weather there are always the stars.

Cavils of this kind do not matter; perspective does. To ask whether St. Brendan made ocean voyages is to ask a misleading omnibus question. The name of Brendan may be only a peg on which the exploits of anonymous seafarers have been hung, and it is the exploits that most concern us, rather than the identity of the doers. Indeed, in the *Navigatio* itself, a striking feature is the constant assumption that Brendan is only one traveller among many. His voyages take place in a context of other voyages. Wherever he goes, even in what appears to be America, he finds Irish monks and hermits who have got there before him. This insistence on the context carries more conviction than anything else in the entire narrative. It is essentially sound. St. Brendan's voyages were, at most, incidents—perhaps rather early ones, perhaps rather spectacular ones—in an impressive history of travel which the Celtic Christian springtime inaugurated.

From the sixth century onward the Irish did seem to be everywhere. Most of the travellers were adventurous monks like the Navigator, setting up communities, founding schools, evangelising the heathen. But there were traders too, and possibly a few laymen drawn by the sheer longing to explore. The romance entitled *The Voyage of Maeldune* is in fact a non-clerical "Brendan."¹ Certain things are now known about the extent of these wanderings, and they are quite in Brendan's favour, or at least (which is more important) in favour of the view that voyages did occur as described. For example, in the seventh century if not earlier, there really was an Irish monastic community in the Faroes. Again, Irish monks did reach Iceland before the Vikings, who found their abandoned bells and croziers in 863. The pioneer Iceland voyages would fit more plausibly into the seventh century than the sixth, but no historian now denies them.

Since the Vikings not only colonised Iceland, but went beyond to Greenland and to Vinland or Massachusetts, their own

¹ However, a comparison is instructive. This and other Celtic fictions portray merely an archipelago lying not far west of Ireland. St. Brendan's long voyage to a land-mass of continental proportions is inconsistent with the general trend of fantasy; it is not the sort of thing that Irishmen were in the habit of inventing. Hence its inspiration may well be factual.

testimony regarding the Irish is well worth noting. It is seldom realised that this reaches beyond Iceland. It reaches to the New World itself, and offers support, if very fragile support, for Irish claims of priority in that quarter.

The *Eyrbyggja Saga* relates the singular experience of the merchant Gudleif. Somewhere about the year 1000 Gudleif visited Dublin to trade. He then sailed round the west of Ireland with the intention of going on to Iceland, but persistent winds drove his ship south-westward for many days. At last an extensive coast opened out in front. The merchant led his crew ashore. They were instantly surrounded and captured by a large party of men whom they "deemed" to be speaking Erse. A debate ensued as to whether the prisoners should be killed or enslaved. They were rescued by a group of riders bearing a banner, who were clearly in authority. The chief, an old man, very tall, spoke to Gudleif in Norse and questioned him narrowly about Iceland. It turned out that this was Biorn the Broadwicker, who had sailed off into the ocean a long while before. He promised to let the prisoners go, but told Gudleif not to encourage other adventurers to come to the country, where the inhabitants were "ill to deal with." Gudleif sailed home bearing a ring for Biorn's old love. His return journey took him over two months.

The English editors of the Saga reject this tale as a fiction suggested by the Viking discovery of America. While it may be a fiction, the rejection is a shade too facile. There is nothing in the accepted versions of the discovery to imply that the Vikings ever knew of America as a great continent which could be reached by going south-west from Ireland. Supposedly they knew only of two or three vague bits of territory lying along the northern route, the next stepping-stones, as it were, after Iceland and Greenland. At the very least the tale of Gudleif hints at the existence of other traditions which have not been given proper attention. As to the nature of these traditions—why that touch about Erse? If one were confronted with Red Indians, to "deem" them to be talking Erse would be to deem rather queerly. Nobody would expect it of obviously alien savages. An eleventh-century Norse writer familiar with what was already known about the "Skraelings" and other American aborigines would hardly have spun the Erse notion out of his head. But if there was a rumour of Irish-descended folk in Virginia or Florida, then the notion

(or Gudleif's conjecture if the story is true) becomes comprehensible.

A few traces of such a rumour survive in other texts. The *Landnama Bok* of the medieval Iclander Thorgilsson refers to Ari Marsen, who was shipwrecked in the area of Gudleif's adventure, after a long sail westward from Ireland. He called the country *Irland ed Mikla*, Greater Ireland. There he long remained and somehow received baptism, presumably from an Irish priest. An appendix to the book lists a series of lands that stretch south from Greenland: the country of the Skraelings, Markland, Vinland itself, and then "White Man's Land." The last is referred to as habitually visited by Irishmen and Icelanders in past times. Another passage identifies it with *Irland ed Mikla*.

St. Brendan's alleged voyage, therefore, is only one of several clues pointing to an Irish knowledge of the New World antedating that of the Vikings. But these clues are all extremely frail. If we hope to find out anything more we must open up a fresh field of inquiry.

II

On Good Friday, 1519, Fernando Cortes landed in Mexico. He brought with him six hundred Spanish followers, sixteen horses and fourteen pieces of artillery. With these he planned to conquer a rich, civilised, strategically defensible empire, governed by the warlike Aztecs under their king Montezuma. It was a daunting proposition. Days passed, however, and the Spaniards found with amazement that nobody tried to stop their progress. Montezuma sent them presents and treated them as honoured guests.

Little by little the explanation emerged. Montezuma was paying Cortes the equivocal compliment of regarding him as a god. Mexican religion was in general, hideous—combining intellectual polish with unparalleled orgies of human sacrifice and cannibalism. Yet one of the gods to whom the victims were offered was oddly ambiguous. This was Quetzalcoatl, meaning "feathered serpent" or strictly "quetzal-feathered serpent," the quetzal being a rare and valued bird found in only one part of Mexico. Quetzalcoatl was a wind-god with a highly circumstantial biography. Long ago he had lived on earth as a king and culture-bringer. He had sailed in from the eastern sea and ruled the Mexican tribes with justice and wisdom, teaching them to till the soil, work

metals, build houses, and compute times and seasons. But a rival god had driven him out. He had gone down to the sea near Tabasco, in the isthmus of Tehuantepec, and taken leave of his people. The accounts of his departure differed. On one point, however, there was universal agreement. Quetzalcoatl would return. He would return in a year that was numbered in a certain way on the calendar. The year 1519 fulfilled the conditions. When the ships of Cortes neared the coast, Montezuma's scouts and astrologers were actually waiting for them.

Quetzalcoatl was a paradoxical being, a prophet as well as a king and god. While on earth he had taught new principles of religion, maintaining monotheism, extolling charity and chastity, practising penance for sin, and absolutely condemning human sacrifice. He had lived celibate and founded convents. All this was wildly at variance with the spirit of sixteenth-century Mexican religion, and with the developed cult of Quetzalcoatl himself. The Spanish friars soon suspected that a Christian mission must have reached Mexico before them. Several considerations favoured that view. The divine visitant was stated to have been a fair-skinned man with a long robe and a full beard. Mexican beards were negligible. He had arrived out of the eastern sea, taught his disciples, and re-embarked—according to the more mundane version—on a strange raft with a sail, promising or threatening to come back. It was this part of the legend which had induced Montezuma to accept the bearded Cortes as the returned god; the friars naturally saw it in another light. They learned also that Quetzalcoatl's robe had been embellished with crosses; that his temples still displayed the cross as an emblem; and that a kind of baptism, a kind of eucharist, and a kind of confession were all familiar practices in Central America.

It has understandably been suggested that St. Brendan or other Irishmen attempted to evangelise Mexico.

The first question to ask is whether the dates fit. The lore of Quetzalcoatl resolves itself into three main ingredients, and his final legend is a composite of the three. We have to distinguish the god, the prophet, and the king. The first of these is non-human and immortal. The second and third are human manifestations of the first. All three must be placed against the puzzling background of pre-Columbian Central America and its inter-related peoples.

Quetzalcoatl as god apparently began to be worshipped at Teotihuacan, built by an unidentified nation somewhere about A.D. 500.¹ His cult was adopted by Toltec and Aztec conquerors, becoming assimilated, after 650, to their bloodthirsty religious conceptions. By Montezuma's time the Feathered Serpent had grown into a complex figure. The tale of his manifestation as a king dated from a tenth-century Toltec monarch regarded as a divine avatar, who was driven out, and whose expelled followers introduced the god into Yucatan. The more mysterious tale of the manifestation as a prophet was awkwardly confused with his. Montezuma expected him to return in vengeance; hence the terror which paralysed resistance to Cortes.

The crucial point about Quetzalcoatl as a prophet is his incompatibility, in this role, with himself as a god, at least under the Toltecs and Aztecs. To make sense, the prophet with his pacific teaching must be pushed back in time to the earliest part of the Toltec period, or further—beyond A.D. 600. That conclusion is reinforced by other legends identifying him with a certain Huemac, who can be assigned fairly confidently to the sixth century.² The prophet seems to be based in the isthmus of Tehuantepec, where he makes his final embarkation. The quetzal bird is indigenous only to this area.

I now speak with the utmost caution. There does not seem to be anything to *forbid* the belief that Quetzalcoatl was in origin a deified man: a bearded white man who came to Tehuantepec in the sixth century, impressed the inhabitants by religious and other teachings, and was afterwards associated with the wind that brought him. For some reason a quetzal-feathered snake was employed as his symbol, and his godhead absorbed various minor ones. It is at least possible. The deification of human beings by American Indians has been caught happening. Two Mexican communities, as recently as the 1930's, were paying divine honours to Montezuma.

The whole problem is rendered more intriguing by the occurrence of the prophet elsewhere in America, with entirely different theological trappings. He is always fair-skinned, bearded,

¹ The date is still extremely uncertain. Cp. the 1953 edition of George C. Vaillant, *The Aztecs of Mexico*. The irreconcilability of pages 6, 179 and 273 is almost comic.

² Vaillant, pp. 68-9 and 79.

and robed down to the feet, and he is always a teacher of enlightened religion or useful arts, but he is not always a feathered serpent. Mr. Thor Heyerdahl of the Kon-Tiki expedition has collected much of the lore about him in his various guises. The Mayas of Yucatan, it transpires, had an especially interesting legend telling of the Greater and the Lesser Arrivals. The Lesser Arrival was the tenth-century advent of Quetzalcoatl as divine king, in other words of the Toltec exiles. The Greater Arrival, that of the prophet himself, was said to have happened much earlier, and was specifically declared not to be the same event. In Colombia the prophet was called Bochica: there too he came from the east. In Peru he was Viracocha (Sea-Foam), and the natives had precise traditions about his residence in the country with other white men before the Incas—that is, before 1200. Viracocha was described in the usual way, with the additional touches of a tonsure and something resembling a breviary. After civilising the people he and his companions left. Some sailed to Panama and crossed the isthmus to the Caribbean, others vanished into the Pacific. The memory of them helped the conquistadors almost as much as the memory of Quetzalcoatl did.

It is hard to dismiss these figures as solar myths or post-Spanish inventions. In all the places concerned, indubitably ancient sculptures portray bearded men with Caucasian features, in sharp contrast to the negroid and mongoloid faces that surround them. One of the most striking examples is at La Venta in the isthmus of Tehuantepec. Mr. Heyerdahl is quite prepared to believe in European visitors, whose supposed departure from Peru fits into his theory of Pacific voyages from America westward. His method of dating, which uses native traditions and a lengthy generation-count, places Viracocha somewhere about 475, with a possible error of a hundred years or so in either direction.¹

To judge from the prophet's extraordinarily widespread legend, he did not begin as a mere aspect of a Mexican god. He may have developed into the god, he may have become identified with the god, he may conceivably have been a parallel myth, but he was an entity in his own right. The sculptures and the almost identical descriptions suggest an historical person, or a composite of several resembling each other. The attributed teaching suggests a Christian

¹ See his *American Indians in the Pacific*.

mission anticipating the great journeys of St. Francis Xavier. And in the period on which the time-clues converge, the Irish monks are the sole candidates.

Imagination dimly presents the picture of a bold but unsustained evangelical effort in the sixth century, conducted by wandering Irishmen from an almost accidental community in the Caribbean. To include or exclude St. Brendan personally is, in the absence of further knowledge, a matter of taste. At any rate we may suppose that there were occasional later voyages, and scattered settlements on the North American mainland. The Vikings—perhaps acting on Irish hints—rediscovered Iceland and the New World. But whereas the Norse expeditions were forgotten, the Irish were remembered.

Here we are on firm ground again. They were remembered. Even if Brendan only discovered America in imagination, his discovery contributed to the achievement of Columbus. The *Navigatio* and its adaptations were widely read in the Middle Ages. Every good medieval map showed "St. Brendan's Isle," often called "Hy Brasail," out in the Atlantic. Madeira, the Canaries and the Azores were successively found and compared with the description; each failure to meet St. Brendan's requirements led to fresh speculation. Columbus was certainly aware of all this, and he is even said to have made inquiries in Galway.

Once more: did the discovery really happen? It is pleasant to reflect that proof may yet be forthcoming. Archaeological field-work in America is still exploratory, and many of the known inscriptions remain baffling. Some unpredictable but conclusive Rosetta Stone may one day teach Christendom to honour the pioneer apostles of the New World.

NOTE

My chief sources for the voyages are Denis O'Donoghue, *Brendaniana*, and George A. Little, *Brendan the Navigator*. Dr. Little argues felicitously in favour of the Atlantic crossing. For the American matter, to which Irish writers do not give close enough attention, I have used—among other books—F. A. MacNutt, *Fernando Cortes*; Maurice Collis, *Cortes and Montezuma*; Thor Heyerdahl, *American Indians in the Pacific*; M. Covarrubias, *Mexico South*; G. C. Vaillant, *The Aztecs of Mexico*; and J. Eric Thompson, *The Rise and Fall of Maya Civilisation*.

The problem of Christian influence on pre-Columbian America has

yet to be adequately treated. Some scholars appear to be resolved in advance that no such influence can have existed; the assiduity with which they gloss over evidence and divert arguments is amusing. Actually I think a field-survey by archaeologists expert in Christian antiquities might yield interesting results. It may be granted, for instance, that the cross is found in pagan contexts, and that Quetzalcoatl's cross represents the four winds. But the one on the disc or shield which he carries is a sort of Celtic cross, with Maltese-type arms broadening outward from a circle. Admittedly the circle is small. There is another example in the Codex Vaticanus B, a pre-Columbian text, in which the cross is combined with a fairly large circle. (Vaillant, *op. cit.*, page 9 and plate 59.) What exactly is known about the history and geographical distribution of the Celtic cross?

Again, one of the bearded stone heads reproduced by Heyerdahl wears what looks like a Phrygian cap. It is rather startling to learn (Butler-Thurston-Attwater *Lives of the Saints*, 23 July) that in Christian art before the eighth century this is the invariable headgear of the Wise Men from the East!

RECUSANT FINES IN ESSEX, 1583—1593

By

MICHAEL O'DWYER

FIFTY YEARS ago, Fr. John Pollen complained that "no adequate account of the persecution (during the reign of Elizabeth) has yet been written." Are we any better off today? The fact is that the day to day accounts of the persecution kept by the Royal Commissions for Causes Ecclesiastical are lost. We still lack the sort of direct evidence which they would have given us. The student of recusant history, therefore, must be ready for frustrations that are sometimes maddening, and, in some fields of research, must content himself with lines of indirect approach. There are clues here and there, some helpful *obiter dicta*, a deduction from this or that known fact.

Nevertheless, there are some sources of information that are as direct as could be desired. For instance, the Statutes of the Realm give the actual text of the laws that were passed. There, at any rate, is the programme of anti-Catholic legislation, though a gap will always exist between the letter of a penal law, indeed of any law, and its impact on the population as a whole. Also it is inevitable in the case of any law designed to hurt people in their possessions that the victims will dodge and resist it, and evade its application by every contrivance possible. Some will resist to death or to the tune of great fines. Others, less strong, will give up the struggle and abandon the Faith, according to the purpose of the law-makers.

This is what happened in the County of Essex. Is it possible to attempt a reconstruction of Catholic misfortunes there during the last two decades of Elizabeth I's reign, by approaching the problem with one question in mind, namely, what fines did the Catholics of Essex pay as a result of Elizabeth's anti-Catholic legislation? What did the penal laws cost them in terms of hard cash?

But that simple question involves all sorts of subsidiary enquiries touching at many levels the lives of Catholics in that period. At one end of the process of examination there are the local court records of the Quarter Sessions.¹ These reveal officially the names of Catholics who were in trouble with the law. They show also how, in session after session, Catholics were brought before the Justices and convicted, under the Act of Uniformity and the Acts of the 1580's, of absenting themselves from church. In Essex it is, therefore, possible to see what was going on in the counties at the business end, so to speak, of the penal laws. But the fact of conviction is no guarantee that fines were actually imposed or collected. That information is to be sought at the other end of the survey, in the Exchequer accounts in the Public Record Office, wherein were entered all fines for recusancy imposed and gathered in the counties.

The question to be decided is how far were these laws enforced. Were the fierce fines imposed and collected as a whole or in part or at all? It is possible to overstate the horror of this situation. It is possible, too, to play it down. Historians are inclined to take a moderate view of Elizabeth I's penal laws against Catholics, and

¹ Quarter Sessions Records, Essex, 1580-96.

to suggest that such legislation was held *in terrorem* over the heads of recusants and invoked only in moments of political crisis, for example, when plots against the Queen or an Armada on the horizon threatened the national peace.

On the other hand the text of the statutes of 23 Eliz. c. 1 and 28 Eliz. c. 6 might lead one to suppose that financial ruin came rapidly to all obstinate recusants throughout England. On whatever scale Tudor money is translated into modern currency, £20 a month was an enormous fine. And to be faced with the confiscation of two-thirds of one's rents and all one's goods in default of paying that enormous fine, was indeed a fearful prospect. We must look behind the text of Elizabeth I's legislation for the aim and policy of the government. What was the intention of the law-giver?

This intention is revealed vividly in a letter from Bishop Aylmer of London to Mr. Secretary Walsingham written 21 June 1577.¹ Aylmer begs advice and help from Walsingham in a matter of great moment concerning the state of the realm.

My Lord of Canterbury and I [the Bishop writes], have received from divers of our brethren that papists do marvellously increase both in number and in obstinate withdrawing of themselves from the church and the service of God. For the remedy whereof the manner of imprisoning of them which hath been used heretofore for their punishment hath not only little availed but hath also been a means by sparing their housekeeping greatly to enrich them.

In view of this situation the bishops had held a conference at which it was determined "to forbear imprisonment of the richer sort and to punish them by round fines." This policy of fines, Aylmer hoped, would "weaken the enemy and touch him much nearer than any punishment hitherto inflicted hath done." And Aylmer foresaw that the fines would have to be imposed for "contemptuous refusing of receiving the communion according to our order and commandments."

Indeed Catholics would be quick to point out that these great fines could not legally be introduced for absence from church since the offence of recusancy was already punished in the Act of Uniformity by the fine of one shilling.

Other interesting possibilities were outlined in this letter to

¹ R. O. Dom. Eliz. 114, No. 22. C.R.S., Vol. 22.

Walsingham: "This manner of fining them will procure the Queen a thousand pounds per year for her coffers." (This, as shall be seen, was a modest piece of optimism.) The Queen would have to be made *animo obfirmato*. She would have to be "got at," "or else nothing will be done." And it would be necessary to protect her somehow "against the importunate suits of courtiers for their friends, lest she should be persuaded to forgive the forfeitures," in which case, "our labour will be lost."

There is the genesis of the legislation of the 1580's. To make sense of events after 1581 Aylmer's letter must be kept in mind. Three months later, in October 1577, the Privy Council sent out letters to the bishops ordering a return to be made within a week of the recusants in their respective dioceses.¹ It is true that the bishops complained that the notice given was too sudden for complete returns, but from the Essex list, however, one sees at work the policy of concentrating on the richer sort since it is for the most part recusants of property and wealth who are named.

In January 1581, Parliament passed the famous Act, 23 Elizabeth, the Act of the £20 fine. By midsummer of that year, all those who failed to attend the Anglican church in the County of Essex began to be summoned to the local quarter sessions courts. I have examined the records of these courts for the years 1581 to 1596.

At first one had a curious impression of legal action leading nowhere. Long lists of people appear in session after session. They seem to go on appearing and to be none the worse for their outing. But after many readings of the court reports the conclusion emerges that the situation is nothing like as harmless as it looks. Endorsements at the end of the court rolls usually state that a true bill was found, that a dozen or so of the persons in the list "have been taken," and that four or five others are in gaol.

At this stage all classes were equally under the eye of the law. The social gradings in any given list range from people like Lady Anne and Lady Mary Petre, Sir Henry Tyrrell and Lady Throckmorton, to men and women classed as servants and labourers. Between these two groups are esquires, gentry, yeomanry, doctors of medicine, such as Dr. Ateslowe of Downham, whose name recurs through all the years in question, and there are gilders, coopers, tailors, fishmongers and bargees. Every class is represented, including lawyers from the Inns of Court and

¹ Dom. Eliz. 118, No. 73.

persons of specialised occupations, such as Tusser the artist and William Byrd, the famous Tudor musician and organist in the Chapel Royal. Moreover (and this cuts across the idea that recusants were wholly servants and retainers of particular great houses) those who appear in court come from every part and every sort of occupation in the county. Indeed the pattern that defines itself is that of a Catholic county in which there is resistance everywhere to a revolution imposed from above and in which through the sixteen years under discussion the emphasis shifts noticeably from those called "the meaner sort" to those who are rich.

The mere fact, however, of indictment and conviction in the local courts is no proof that fines imposed there were actually paid. There is no mention yet of fines or confiscations of rents. All that can be claimed is that after each court session a number of Essex people were imprisoned or fled from the area in order to escape the attentions of the sheriff and his men.¹

Since local historians have at times not gone beyond local records, they have come to the comfortable but misleading conclusion that sixteenth-century Catholics suffered no more than the nuisance of being brought at intervals before the Quarter Sessions. One writer searching for an analogy has compared the workings of 23 Eliz. c. 1 to the policy of rounding up aliens during the war. It is true that the Act did not work very well. It had to be supplemented by another Act in 1586,² under which a recusant who did not pay the fines forfeited two-thirds of his rent and all his goods to the Queen. But in this supplementary Act it is very clearly ordered that the Clerk of the Peace in the local courts must send to the Exchequer an estreat or précis of all convictions.

In the next stage of the legal process the Exchequer authorities would demand that the sheriff in every county must collect the fines imposed in the county courts and, on collection, the money was entered in the Pipe Roll and the Pells receipt books.³ It is to these sources one must go for the financial story.

From the Pells receipt books at the Public Record Office I have found that twenty-two Essex recusant families paid between them £4,880 2s. 7d. during the years 1583 to 1593. These twenty-two families, out of more than two hundred whose names

¹ Q.S.R., Essex, 80/77, 78.

² 28 Eliz. c. 6.

³ E. 401/. *ct. seq.*

appear regularly in the lists of the local court records, are the families that were the richer people of the county. This can be clearly seen from their wills and the Inquisitions Post Mortem. One man alone paid the full £20 a month for the ten years. He was Ferdinand Paris, whose sister was Lady Lovell. Ferdinand Paris owned land in Essex, Sussex, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk.¹ According to the Pells receipt books, in 1583 he owed £420. At intervals he paid large sums of money, usually £200 or £220 at a time, and when he came to die in 1600 he had little left to give, except one shilling to every poor householder and widow in two villages.² From 1583 to 1593 he paid altogether, so far as the records show, £2,953 6s. 8d. for the privilege of not attending the Anglican church.

Next in the list is Roger Martin.³ He paid fines amounting over ten years to £981 12s. 1d. This man owned land in Essex and Suffolk, and, from the extent of his property in his inquisition post mortem, he, like Ferdinand Paris, is one of the richer class.

Light is shed by the records on the criss-cross pattern of recusant family-relationships in Essex. It appears that Martin's son, Richard, was married to Eleanor Mannock, and that two-thirds of Richard Martin's land was confiscated under the Act 28 Eliz. c. 6. Francis Mannock was Richard's father-in-law, and because he, Francis, conformed to the Protestant religion, he was the Crown official appointed to collect money due from Richard to the Queen. This was one way in which Catholics saved something from the wreck, namely, through the help of a Protestant neighbour or relative. The relationship between the two men may account for the fact that under the Act of 1581 Richard Martin paid no more than half the total due for the ten years.

Next in the list is Rooke Green, who deserves an essay to himself. He not only paid fines to the amount of £397 9s. 2d.⁴ for the ten years, but spent most of these years and most of the next decade in Colchester and Ely gaols. He also was of the richer class, and was described in the state papers as one of those "Restrained in 1587" in Essex. He was among those committed

¹ C. 142/300/171. Inquisition Post Mortem.

² Will, F. Paris, 17-18 Woodhall.

³ C. 142/408/129. Inquisition Post Mortem.

⁴ Recusant Roll, Essex, C.R.S., Vol. 18, and E. 401/. *et seq.*

for papistry in 1577 and imprisoned in the house of the Treasurer of Walden, "To be conferred with all by Mr. Lawson and Mr. Harrison, preachers."¹

That was the method which Bishop Aylmer and his colleagues had pronounced quite ineffective in 1577. It seems that Rooke Green remained in gaol until 1582. In 1590 he is again in gaol in Ely and other places,² and in the 1593 quarter sessions record³ we hear of him again in a certificate of his place of abode. In 1585, according to the Pells receipt books, Rooke Green was in debt to the Crown for £240, of which he paid £57 10s. od. This £240 probably represents his aggregate debt for convictions from 1581, the year in which the Act 23 Eliz. came into force. In 1589 his tenants of the manor of Great Sampford paid £31 10s. 6d. on his behalf. They were still paying £18 per half year in 1591 and in 1593.

These three Essex recusants paid the largest fines. There were eighteen others paying fines, ranging from Ambrose Jermen £96, William Wiseman £43, William Mannock £45 13s. 4d., John and William Daniel £90, Thomas Crowley £50 12s. 8d., William Tucker £33 15s. od., William Fitch £37 10s. od., Thomas Moore £10 os. 4d., to those who paid small amounts, e.g. William Byrd £6, Richard White £6 13s. 4d., Thomas Hales, £5, William Daniel £1 13s. 4d. and Edmund Church £2.

Bishop Aylmer's policy of fines, therefore, worked out in the following manner. First of all, the Catholics who actually paid according to the Pells books were those who were meant to pay, namely, the richer sort. Clearly there was little use in chasing a cooper or a gilder or a maid-servant in and out of the courts for £20, for such people were unlikely ever to possess even five pounds. It would have been a waste of time. The aim and policy was to break the leaders. Secondly, though not all the wealthy people who appeared in the quarter sessions did in fact pay fines, by 1590 the emphasis even at this level was exclusively on those who were presumed to have the money. In other words, by the 1590's the fishmongers, tailors and gilders are hardly in evidence at all.

After so much searching it would at first sight seem strange that out of two to three hundred families considered only twenty-

¹ A.P.C. Vol. 10, p. 313 (N.S.).

² A.P.C. Vol. 15, p. 208 (N.S.).

³ Q.S.R. 125/51.

two paid fines. What of other rich persons? A very important factor in this question was the policy of compounding for the fines due. For example, in the States Papers¹ there is a letter from Sir Thomas Mildemay to the Privy Council dated 27 March 1586. Mildemay replies to an order from the Privy Council in which he had been told to call before him certain recusants in Essex and discuss with them the possibility of paying so much a year instead of £20 a month.

Seeking to advance Her Majesty's commodity such as lay in us [he writes], we then received their several offers set down under their hands which we send herewith unto your honour. . . . If so much be true as had been by them severally alleged unto us, some protested by oaths, some others uttered with tears; we then must needs think that the offer made be very reasonable considering that we find Her Majesty's gracious inclination to leave them a reasonable portion of their living to maintain their charge.

The recusants concerned in Mildemay's letter were Rooke Green, Thomas Hale, John Burre and Thomas Crowley. Rooke Green protested that he had ten children, whereof seven of them "are yet to be bestowed, four of them being daughters." He offered to pay out of his poor living the sum of £40 a year. Thomas Hale said that notwithstanding that he had eight children, the youngest thirteen years of age and each one unmarried and debts, amounting to £300, he would pay to Her Majesty twelve nobles a year. John Burre would pay 40s. a year with many protestations of loyalty and gratitude to Her Majesty. Thomas Crowley offered £30 a year. He noted that this agreement would protect him "from all vexations of informers."

It is clear from the letters quoted that the Queen was not getting and had no hope of getting £20 a month, and that she would be glad to get what she could.² It is difficult, however, to say that this method of composition was followed, since Rooke Green, or, rather, his tenants, were paying £31 10s. 6d. every half-year in 1589. However, his total of £397 paid for the ten years suggests that his average per annum for the ten years was roughly £40. Thomas Crowley, on the other hand, paid only

¹ S.P. Dom. 12/187, No. 64, I-IV.

² S.P. 12/182, f. 135. No. 61. According to this document, recusants are officially classed as (a) Those able to pay the whole penalty of the statute (b) Those able to pay in part, (c) Those able to pay none.

£50 according to the Pells receipt books for the whole of the period in spite of his offer to compound for £30 per annum. And all the Queen got from Thomas Hale for the ten years was £5. From John Burre there is no record of any payment in the Pells receipt books.

Bishop Aylmer in his letter foresaw the possibility that strings would be pulled at Court in order to persuade the Queen to pardon the forfeitures. He was right in his suspicion. In the quarter sessions we read of direct intervention on the part of the Queen in favour of Lady Mary Petre, who was presented in 1581 as a recusant. A letter from the Court addressed to Mildemay and signed by the Earl of Sussex reads:

The Queen's most excellent majesty being informed that the Lady Petre is presented for recusant and understanding that at this present she is great with child, hath of her gracious favour been pleased that all proceedings against her for any presentment or indictment in any cause should be stayed until Her Majesty should signify her pleasure to the contrary.

On 14 April, Mr. Thomas Roberts, the parson of Ramsden, Grays,¹ reported that he ministered communion according to the Book of Common Prayer to Sir Henry Tyrrell, Knight, in his oratory place at his mansion house in the parish of Downham in the presence of six other recusants, being communicants with the said Sir Henry. A certificate to this effect is signed by Thomas Robert (Clerk). During the sixteen years under discussion that sort of failure was not uncommon, though it was for the most part temporary. As late as 1631 Sir Henry Tyrrell was said to be "a Papist who does not frequent church."² Two women named Daniell, who were among those who took communion with Sir Henry Tyrrell, were still cited as recusants in 1590, and one of them is among the twenty-two persons recorded as paying fines in the Pells receipt books. Failures of this kind, however temporary, were in the long run disastrous. They were a tinkering with heresy which could have only one result, namely, the collapse of Catholic resistance where resistance was most vital.

Perhaps the most common method of evading fines was the simple method of not being at home when the sheriff called. This

¹ Q.S.R. 80/21.

² Archd. Essex Minute Book XIII, f. 219.

was the case when one finds at the end of the sheriff's report, "Not found in the Bailiwick."

Finally, we read in the quarter sessions records of something which looks like forcible rescue, or plain connivance on the part of Crown officials. A certain Mr. Edmund Daniel was arrested and committed to the safe keeping of William Golding. Mr. Golding either sent, "gyve leve," or suffered Edmund Daniel, his wife and servants, recusants, to go to Suffolk, notwithstanding he promised to bring them for trial at the day and place contained in his warrant.

In conclusion, the Catholic families of Essex acted as one would have expected them to act and as Elizabeth and her government foresaw that they would act. Bishop Aylmer was very precise in his pre-view of the situation which developed as a result of the great fines. One cannot read the local records without catching something of the atmosphere of desperation during those critical years. The efforts at evasion, the compounding, the flight from the area, together with the deliberately selective policy of the government, explain the gap between the numbers of those who paid and those who could have paid. There were also the weak who bowed before the storm, and men like Rooke Green, who went to gaol and stayed in gaol.

Moreover, closer attention must be given to the question of conveyancing as the principal method of defeating the impact of the law. The Acts of Parliament against fraudulent conveyancing have only one aim in these years, namely the punishment of Catholics who used this device as a means of escaping ruin. It is difficult, in the nature of the situation, to get evidence of connivance on the part of local officials. But this sort of evasion went on. A memorandum in the State Papers Domestic has an item, "Letters to be written to Sheriffs to avoid all partialities."¹

What then did the Penal Laws cost the Catholics of Essex in terms of hard cash? Although exact statistics can be drawn only from the Royal Account Books, yet from our knowledge of the behaviour of informers we can justifiably suspect that the £4,880 2s. 7d. over ten years is a figure that does not tell the whole story. What it does tell us, is, in all conscience, frightful enough.

¹ S.P. 12/182, f. 135, No. 6.

FISCHER VON ERLACH

By

D. P. O'CONNELL

IT is three hundred years since the birth of Fischer von Erlach. A generation or so ago this would have been regarded in England as a matter of no significance, but there is now an English public to whom the baroque is no mere vulgar excess, no trite artistic conceit, no barbaric gala, but a genuine religion culture which both expresses and perpetuates features inherent in Christian civilisation. It is not inappropriate, therefore, that Fischer von Erlach should be remembered; and not only as the Austrian—indeed the Central European—Wren; but as something that Wren never was—an architect of universal ideas, who profoundly influenced the mind, as well as the face and aspect of much of Europe. The average Englishman's contact with the baroque is through Italy, where indeed the greatest achievements of baroque architecture are to be found. But except in the few great instances the Italians never brought the baroque to consummation. The reasons for this are many, and finance is by no means the least after 1680 or so; but perhaps the primary reason is climatic. The baroque is intrinsically an architecture of light and space as well as of substance and forms; but in the Italy of perpetual sunshine a church is a refuge from light and heat. It frowns upon the sun, defying it to enter, revelling instead in its dim, cavern-like atmosphere of mysticism. North of the Alps, however, every endeavour was made to capture the sun, to bring him inside in planes of light and shade as an element of construction; and where this was impossible, to counterfeit him in amber glass and shafts of gold. There is therefore a spatial dynamic in northern baroque that is implicit but largely unexploited in southern; and the canons of this dynamism were ascertained and fixed by Fischer von Erlach.

It is commonplace to recall that the baroque is essentially the gothic spirit bursting once more through the constraint of the classical forms, lifting the vision to the heavens. Once the issue

between Catholicism and the Reformation was clearly established the classicism of the Renaissance could no more stand still than could the culture which produced it. The new Catholicism of the Thirty Years War period was a thoroughgoing business which could not express itself other than as it did, in flourish, energy, boldness, ecstasy, liberation. The baroque soars and sings as Catholic Europe did under the influence of the mystical cult flowing out of Spain. It is by no means a Jesuit monopoly, and in fact north of the Alps it was the Benedictines who eventually became its greatest patrons; but it is certainly an essential and typical aspect of the Jesuit culture as it was generated in the south, and propagated in Central Europe. The prayer of the imagination was opposed to the formalism of the Reform and the gloominess of Calvinism; the senses which in the Renaissance were released from constraint were captured and held in thrall; the pagan gods who ruled once more from painted ceilings were transformed into analogies of divine love and justice; in short the whole being was absorbed and dissolved in a totality of subjection to Mother Church, as she exemplified herself in the glory and jubilaum of ecclesiastical architecture. It is significant that the Gesù is claimed as the first baroque church, significant too that it was a Jesuit, Fratel Pozzo, who brought baroque perspective to fruition in the church of San Ignazio and at Frascati; and collaborated with and influenced Fischer von Erlach in Vienna. No less significant is it that the first full-blooded Jesuit architecture north of the Alps, St. Michael in Munich, in date just a little later than the Gesù, is the source of all Bavarian baroque.

It may be true so far as Western Europe is concerned that the Peace of Westphalia extinguished the fires of religious enthusiasm, leaving the baroque a secular, monarchic cult. This is not true of Central Europe, where the Faith was still at grips with Islam and where the people preserved the sense of crusade. Only when this is understood can one explain just why it was that an unscrupulous and not very successful adventurer, Max Emanuel of Bavaria, was able to inspire the devoted idealism of his people. It was because he dedicated his standards to Mary the *Patrona Bavariae* before departing to save Vienna from the Turk, and because he laid at her feet on his return the trophies he took at Belgrade. The baroque came to fulfilment in the mood of

Te Deum that followed the Turkish Wars, and it was Fischer von Erlach who captured that mood in stone and stucco. He was the first of the natives to be an architectural *Grand Seigneur*. Hitherto it was Italians who had the monopoly. Fischer was from Graz, but he was thoroughly cosmopolitan. At fourteen he was in Italy, and Bernini, Borromini and the ceilings of da Cortona were his mentors. He saw with the eyes and the vision of an Austrian, and had the sense of form of his Italian masters. The two hand in hand, the dynamism and the discipline, were the essentials of his virtuosity.

One can see this in the designs of 1690 for a triumphal arch to be erected in Vienna as part of the celebrations when the Holy Roman Emperor returned from his coronation at Augsburg. The structure bursts with its own internal energy. There are sharply contrasting planes of concave and convex, and a boldly emphasised cornice that Fischer's namesake, Johann Michael Fischer, was so successfully to exploit in Bavaria two generations later. The whole affair, however, is one of incredible fantasy. Fischer's imagination was like an inexhaustible waterfall. It could not be contained by form, and hence his structures could not contain their own internal vitality and restlessness. So novel were they that when the *Kollegiankirche* at Salzburg was in course of construction between 1694 and 1707, the students jeered at the architect and wrote in their journal that if an old man were to enter the bow-fronted, exploding building, he would not know where he was and would be frightened. Frightened indeed, in the same way a man is frightened who is plunged into a whirlpool, or perhaps into paradise. For paradise is what the baroque is seeking, and what Fischer, of all baroque architects, sought for most. He tried to find it in the *Karlskirche* in Vienna, where he let the centrifugal force of his circular composition exhaust itself in the vault. Borromini had, of course, done the same thing in *S. Agnese*, and Fischer could not be content with treading a well-defined path. He drew daring and yet more daring plans, including a town plan for Berlin which would have made that city a rival to the monumental glories of Dresden. But they remained plans, for the same reason that the baroque could only counterfeit eternity, not substitute for it. They were too grand, too fantastic, too prodigious to be encompassed in mere stones and mortar.

There is, therefore, surprisingly little in the way of actual buildings to record Fischer's genius. It is the influence that his plans had, once they had been reduced to the dimensions of possibility, that marks him out. His restlessness, his sadness and his enthusiasms he disciplined into canons of construction. His later plans, included in his famous book *Entwürf einer historischen Architektur*, which became a standard text in Germany and Austria after its publication in 1721, were compromises between the demands of his spirit and the limitations imposed upon them by the laws of physics. His soul had been touched by fire, by the fires of love and the fires of disappointment. Professionally he was not the success his younger rival Lukas von Hildebrandt was. His second wife ran away, his noble paymasters did not pay, and he, newly ennobled, had to go cap in hand to them and humble his pride. Like many other geniuses, he was not and could not be happy because he was eternally confronted by paradox. His features clearly showed his internal struggle, and his designs could not but do likewise. The contrast between the man himself and Wren is the contrast between the assured urbanity of St. Paul's and the emotional upheaval of the *Kollegiankirche*.

All over south Germany and Austria are churches which are the inheritors of Fischer's reconciliation of apparent opposites. They are forgotten treasures at the ends of impossible roads. Spengler described them as fugues, and the analogy has been repeated *ad nauseam*. How much influence they had on the minds and imaginations of the people is not difficult to suggest. The stodginess of the high baroque melted into the ephemeral and transcendental caprice of rococo. The Mass became an intimate *matinée*, in which the Sacrifice of Calvary was an occasion when the Redeemer held court from the Cross. The peasant could as a courtier each morning participate in the Divine *Levée* and be conscious of his dignity and heirship to eternal life. The spell was not easily broken, and the materialism of the Enlightenment found itself opposed in Central Europe by a settled tradition of devotion which it could not overcome. It was a tradition born of the mysticism of St. Teresa, fired in the Thirty Years War and the Turkish Wars, and personalised in the art forms of the late baroque. Just as in a French cathedral of the high Middle Ages, so in the churches of Fischer's successors, is there an aware-

ness of the perennial in Catholic culture. And this affinity of the gothic and the rococo is perhaps the greatest paradox of all.

ST. GEORGE'S, SOUTHWARK

Centenary and Re-opening

"THE GREAT LINK"¹ is a happy title for this history of St. George's Cathedral, Southwark, published most opportunely to herald the re-opening of the Cathedral, whose destruction appeared to be the greatest of the tragedies Catholic London suffered in the War. The earliest known predecessor was an obscure Mass-house in Kent Street, which is memorable also for its association with Fr. John Baptist Moloney, who was arrested there in 1767 for saying Mass. He was the last priest to be sentenced to life imprisonment in England for this offence. The year 1780 witnessed the Gordon Riots, and it was at St. George's Fields, possibly on the actual site of the present cathedral, that the mob first gathered. Thus the links of the cathedral with penal times are tolerably established.

The first chapel to be built for the Catholics of Southwark was situated in the obscure and disreputable quarter known as Bandyleg Walk, and it was superseded in 1790 by a larger one near the Elephant and Castle. Fr. Thomas Doyle, who joined the staff there in 1829, the year of Emancipation, was mainly responsible for the building of St. George's Church which was to replace this chapel. A witty and indefatigable mendicant, he appealed personally to the Catholic nobility of Europe, including Queen Marie-Amelie, wife of Louis-Philippe of France, and the King of Bavaria, and obtained their financial help. In spite of Fr. Doyle's efforts, Pugin, who had been appointed architect, was hampered by lack of funds. Nevertheless, he did contrive to make it possible for 3,000 people to be accommodated in the new church, which now supplanted St. Mary Moorfields, just as St. Mary's had previously supplanted the embassy chapels, as the principal London church.

It was the first Catholic church in London since the Reformation to be built on this scale, and its opening, with the fullest pontifical ceremony, aroused nation-wide comment that was not on the whole unfavourable, even though *The Times*, influenced, no doubt, by *odium theologicum*, commented discourteously on the "ugliness" of the

¹*The Great Link: A History of St. George's Cathedral, Southwark*, by the Very Rev. Canon Bernard Bogan (Burns and Oates 12s 6d).

clergy in the procession, with the exception of the superior ones, "who bore themselves with a port which was wonderfully imposing." The *Brighton Herald*, however, distinguished between the Englishmen amongst the clergy—"fine-looking, handsome men; there was no mistaking the light Saxon complexion and blue eyes of many among them"—and others, many of whom it believed to be foreigners. The *Standard* rose above this insular prejudice and pertinently observed that the opening of St. George's, with foreign bishops and some three hundred priests all "clustered together in the immediate neighbourhood of the Archbishop of Canterbury," was the most remarkable day in London for Catholics since the reign of Queen Mary.

St. George's was not designed as a cathedral. It became one (which, incidentally, disposes of some of the criticism levelled against its architect). When in 1850 the Hierarchy was restored, the episcopal administration of the diocese of Southwark was for a time committed to Cardinal Wiseman along with the archdiocese of Westminster. Until the arrival of the first Bishop of Southwark, Wiseman used St. George's as his cathedral. It was here that he was installed as first Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and from its pulpit he delivered some celebrated addresses. With the coming of the saintly Thomas Grant (14 September 1851)—he was characteristically installed in the sacristy, piety rather than *panache* being his outstanding quality—Wiseman had to reconcile himself to diminished glories. At the same time the Jesuit Fathers, despite Wiseman's view that the Warwick Street church could have amply met the needs of that neighbourhood, very properly continued to press on with an ambitious church at Farm Street. Nor did the Oratorians see any reason to halt their plans for a new church to be built on what he called "the open view principle."

Although the period of its pre-eminence was brief, St. George's has enjoyed a longer and, perhaps, more varied career than any of London's other great Catholic churches. In spite of its almost total destruction on 16 April 1941, or perhaps because of it, St. George's has contrived to extend its associations. Many Irish Catholics have contributed most generously to the new chapel of St. Patrick. In 1945 the present Queen Mother visited the ruins together with the then Princess Elizabeth. Her reigning Majesty, her husband, Prince Philip, and the Queen Mother have also contributed financially to its restoration. St. George's was opened on 4 July 1848. May its second century, to commence on 4 July 1958, equal and eclipse the first! Architecturally this begins well with the addition of a clerestory (the omission of which was a disappointment to Pugin and darkened the interior) and the enlargement of the sanctuary.

L. E. WHATMORE

REVIEWS

THE NATURE OF BUDDHISM

Buddhist Himalaya, by D. L. Snellgrove (Bruno Cassirer 35s).

THE sub-title of this book is: "Travels and Studies in quest of the origins and nature of Tibetan Religion." Mr. Snellgrove, Lecturer in the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London, has travelled through all the districts he discusses save Lhasa itself, about which he acknowledges help from Mr. H. E. Richardson, long resident there. His objective is limited—to discuss the origins and nature of Tibetan Buddhism as such. In so entangled, if not nebulous, a matter, a few certainties can be stated. "Buddhism" began in India but is practically dead there. (I myself think that recent Buddhist manifestations there are really artificial and politico-nationalist in essence, and led by rationalisers of later forms of Buddhism. So in Ceylon, I gathered that modern Buddhism there is definitely "modernist" and political and much more susceptible of Communism than Mohammedanism, for the Mohammedan profoundly believes in God, unlike the Buddhist.) It is also certain that Sakya-the-Sage (as Mr. Snellgrove calls him) was a historical personage, who held, as axiomatic, that life is Pain, that Pain is due to Desire, and that when one no more desires, one has reached Nirvana (a "blowing out": an extinguished lamp is often used as symbol of this: but not-being is not the same as Nothing). This Indian prince achieved Enlightenment, left his wife and dignities and preached this "way of life" to those willing to listen. His personal name was Siddharta; his family-name, Gotama; his clan-name, Sakya: he was born about 566 B.C. and died about 480 B.C. He taught no metaphysics, nor a God, nor creation, nor survival. He accepted the Indian idea of transmigration (which did not mean a soul passing into a new body). This was represented by a Wheel, which has no beginning or end, and from which only total extinction of desire can liberate one. (This found its way into the gold Pythagorean tablets—"I have flown off from the sorrowful weary wheel.") Thus there is not a Buddha: anyone who has reached Enlightenment is a Buddha, and it looks to our eyes as if everyone would ultimately become one, or rather, there would be only one Buddha, though neither "who," "what," or "where" could be predicated of "him." The Wheel and the Stupa (the stylised Mound in which Sakya-the-Sage was buried) are invariable items in the elaborate decoration which came to surround Buddhist shrines. But, having soaked one's imagination in what so much of the Orient sees (the plates in this book are splendid) one understands how baffling, for example, Chartres would seem to a Tibetan, though possibly less than the Parthenon which

incarnates no mysticism but a rigidly logical system of thought. The Tibetan, however, a jolly, peaceful sort of person whether good or bad, is chiefly interested in rituals and, whether monk or not, is apt to laugh when asked some philosophical question such as Europeans might. Yet he has a very deep religious sense, likely to last till he is dehumanised by the new China. Certainly the attempt, frequent two generations ago, to interconnect Buddhism and Christianity, is futile, since "the whole context of Buddhism is essentially different from that of Christianity." Thus the Tibetan's fervent faith in the "Three Precious Ones in time of trouble" refers to Buddha, Law-Doctrine, Assembly, and in no way to the Trinity; but we should be interested to know when the legend of the Sage's triple temptation (like, and yet so totally unlike—because magical—the purely Palestinian account of Our Lord's testing) found its way into the Buddhist complex. Fr. de Lubac's *Rencontre du Bouddhisme et de l'Occident* is referred to, and de la Vallée Poussin, from whom, half a century ago, we began to learn about a subject which puts a maximum strain on our hellenised mental structure. Therefore, a difficult, yet very humane book, almost necessary for those who want to know how more than a third of our fellow humans spiritually live.

C. C. MARTINDALE

FRONTIERS OF MUSIC

The New Oxford History of Music. Vol. 1: Ancient and Oriental Music.
 Edited by Egon Wellesz (Oxford University Press 63s).

BARELY FIFTY YEARS had elapsed after the original *Oxford History of Music* had appeared when it was found necessary, in spite of interim attempts to paper over the cracks, to produce a totally new work: *The New Oxford History of Music*. This is in itself a striking indication of the immense amount of research into musical history which has been carried out in this century. Even more impressive, however, is a comparison of the two Volumes 1. In the original history, Vol. 1 covered "The Polyphonic Period" (which, broadly speaking, is dealt with in Vols. 2-3 of the new series). The whole vast range of ancient and Oriental music was virtually ignored: it was a *terra incognita*. Not until Curt Sachs published *The Rise of Music in the Ancient World* in 1943 as the first volume in the American *Norton History of Music* did the first general survey in English appear.

Unlike the American series (and unlike the original Oxford series, too), each volume of *The New Oxford History* is broken up into a series of contributions by different specialists. The advantages of this method are obvious, especially when, as here, the authors are scholars who have

themselves been pre-eminent in the researches which have added so much to our knowledge. The weaknesses are more subtle but no less important: the dangers of disproportion, of overlapping or omission, of radically different methods and aims. Some of these faults were not entirely absent from Vol. 2 of *The New Oxford History*.¹ In the present volume, however, under the skilful editorship of Dr. Wellesz, they have been reduced to a minimum.

The scope of the book can best be shown by a summary of its contents. In Chapter 1 Marius Schneider deals with "Primitive Music." The next two chapters are devoted to a study by Laurence Picken of "The Music of Eastern Asia." In Chapter 4 Arnold Bake writes on Indian Music, and he is followed by Henry Farmer on the music of ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt (chapters 5 and 6). Two American scholars, Carl Kraeling and Lucetta Mowry, contribute an excellent chapter on "Music in the Bible," and the music of post-biblical Judaism is described by Eric Werner. One is sometimes conscious, in these two chapters, of the difficulty the authors had in not poaching on the preserves of Vol. 2 (in which the earliest Christian music is discussed) especially as the two volumes together have considerably clarified our picture of the development of Christian from Jewish liturgy. However, a line had to be drawn somewhere, and the division between specifically Christian and non-Christian music seems as good as any (and certainly more valid than, say, a division between European and Asian music), though there are certainly places (e.g. the Gnostic hymns) where cross-references—which should be a marked feature of a publication of this kind—would have been helpful. Ancient Greek music, which in the past has received more attention than the other subjects in this book, is re-examined (in Chapter 9), with a thoroughness which takes nothing for granted, by Isobel Henderson. J. E. Scott writes on Roman music, and in Chapter 11 Henry Farmer re-appears to conclude Vol. 1 with "The Music of Islam."

One major difficulty which runs through a great deal of this book is that of saying anything definite about the music itself. It is quite astonishing how much can be deduced from literary, archaeological and other sources, how much can be said about the instruments used, about the various theories of music, about the function of music in religion, its place in social life and so on. But the tantalising question remains: what did the actual music *sound* like? Adequate musical notations are a very recent phenomenon in the history of man, and the unfortunate fact is that we have no example whatsoever of ancient

¹ Volume 2 was actually the first to appear. It was published in 1954. One hopes the O.U.P. are reflecting that, at this rate, we shall be in the 1980s before the projected series of 11 volumes is completed.

oriental music or of Roman music, and only a few fragments of Greek music. Even where the music under discussion can be reproduced—as is the case, of course, in modern Eastern music, or where musical notations developed—there are serious difficulties both for the writer and the reader. The notation with which we are familiar, for example, is a poor instrument for representing music other than that of our own Western tradition. It may be noted that H.M.V. is producing a series of records, "The History of music in sound" to act as a companion to *The New Oxford History*.

No aphorism has ever been coined more silly than that which denies that there are frontiers in music. We can readily and genuinely admire a Chinese dragon carved in jade five centuries before Christ, the cave paintings of Lascaux, the Great Mosque of Cordova, the Elgin marbles—to name but a few sufficiently disparate examples—and yet even the contemporary music of a few thousand miles away leaves us baffled. Fortunately this book is not only a symptom of our widening interests: it has itself tremendously enlarged our horizons.

ERIC TAYLOR

ST. THOMAS WITHOUT TEARS

Principality and Polity, by Thomas Gilby, O.P. (Longmans 30s).

"ST. THOMAS, then, was not one of those who would extend the competence of public administration. He was sensitive to two dangers, of too improving a spirit on the part of legislators, and of indifference on the part of subjects. Citizens must watch with a certain vigilant irreverence for any signs of school-marm fussiness in their rulers, lest the police become our moral mentors, and measure the length of bathing costumes on the beach."

The difficulty of reviewing this book is that Fr. Gilby is minister to many such happy marriages between theory and practice. The reporter has no room for the photographs of so many happy couples.

To all in or under authority in church or state, this harmony is a real problem. The study of St. Thomas under such a learned and practised guide should contribute much to the working of God's plan in God's way. There is deep and solid learning in the author's study of the influences at work on the rise of state theory in the West. We follow the theologians in their study of the "Bible as mundane guide," then of Natural Law; then come the jurists of canon and civil law. A chapter on "Landed Men and Wanderers" gives a fascinating picture of friars: later, we have a useful estimate of the influence of Dominican government on political democracy.

Lecturers and teachers will find much to help them in Part II, where St. Thomas talks profoundly, wisely and wittily (as if inter-

viewed by Fr. Gilby on TV) about the Eternal Law, Natural Law, types of positive law, even on the distressing "other law in my members."

"Law-making as Art," "The Limits to Legalism," "Legality and Politics," "Legal Supremacy," are a display of keys held by St. Thomas to many a modern problem of sin and crime, delinquency and punishment.

It may disappoint some to find only one reference in the text to a subject as topical and urgent as war, especially in view of the incomparable part played by Dominican theologians from Vitoria to our own times.

If the critic must find a grumble, we challenge the author to find St. Albert the Great on all the pages to which the index assigns him; and though we are told that St. Albert resigned his See of Ratisbon after one year, with the "reflection that a prelate was expected to behave more like Sardanapalus than like Christ," there is a provoking silence about S., banished even from the index.

Fr. Gilby and we deserve a second edition soon.

✠ T. D. ROBERTS

THE RAINBOW COMES

The Rainbow Comes and Goes, by Diana Cooper (Rupert Hart-Davis 25s.)

THE ART of autobiography is notoriously difficult, and beset with many pitfalls; and the fact that in this case the writer is a well-known beauty and the widow of a great public servant in no way lessens the risks involved. The fact that they have in this case been so largely circumvented may be put down to Lady Diana's credit inasmuch as what she gives us is not really the story of her life at all but rather the story of her love. She does indeed tell us something of her childhood, of what life was like at Belvoir in the spacious pre-1914 days, and of her coming out as a girl in London; but it is only with the appearance of Duff Cooper on the scene at about p. 100 that the real story begins. Thereafter it is the tale of true love, very touchingly told, between two highly intelligent and gifted beings, the course of which, rendered unsmooth, first by the ordinary hazards of parental disapproval and later by the extra-ordinary one of war, finally culminates triumphantly in the happiest and most successful of marriages.

Lady Diana may not be able to spell (she would have us believe that so phonetic is her method that under the influence of a cold she transposes b's for m's) but, as one would expect, she is past-mistress in the art of turning a pretty phrase. When, for example, in describing a bathroom in an early London house she says it had a narrow tin bath

"like the one in which the brides were drowned" one knows exactly what she means. Or her description of the officious behaviour of courtiers at palace functions: "They shoo you and speak to you as they would to a wet dog." Or again: "Being by a long way the youngest I was used to treading water and pretending to be cleverer than I was." These are all apt and illuminating expressions, and the last one shows that total lack of self-conceit which is characteristic of the writer and of which the book as a whole bears frequent and pleasing witness.

A small but persistent historical error crops up on p. 136 where it says: "Maurice Baring had joined Trenchard, then creating the Royal Flying Corps." The R.F.C. had already been created, when Trenchard took over, by Sir David Henderson; under whom, as it happened, Maurice Baring likewise served. Also, why the inverted commas around the title under the frontispiece? Surely the words are not a quotation.

The book is handsomely produced with numerous illustrations (in groups throughout the text as the fashion now seems to be), and the end-paper designs of Martin Battersby's murals in the Chateau St. Firmin at Chantilly add to its distinction. The story ends soon after the writer's marriage. The Rainbow, in fact, has come, but it is to be hoped we may hear more of it, for it has a long way to go yet before it reaches its full splendour.

JOHN McEWEN

TO DUNKIRK AND BACK

A History of the Benedictine Nuns of Dunkirk, with a Preface by D. B. Wyndham Lewis (Burns and Oates 21s.)

WITH the object apparently of stimulating vocations, the Benedictine nuns of Teignmouth have released this account of what the community has been doing since it was founded in Dunkirk in the reign of Charles II. By any standards, the story is a strangely eventful one, especially when we remember that it concerns women who of set purpose sought to live in retirement from the world. They sought peace and quiet in which to ponder over the eternal verities, but what the world gave them frequently fluctuated between open hostility and an indifference that was meant to be felt. It is rather like the story of the Church in miniature.

Trouble in one form or another was never missing from their lives. Even their friends were at times burdensome. But they continued to live on in moderate comfort with ample numbers till towards the end of the eighteenth century, concerning themselves with the education of the daughters of the great English Catholic families. Then a dramatic change came about. Financial difficulties arose. The school decreased

in numbers. Novices presented themselves less frequently and were often found to be without the necessary qualities. It was a time of enormous political and social upheaval. From it the nuns—because they were both English and ladies—did not go unscathed. When the Duke of York besieged the town they became objects of popular indignation. They were watched and threatened and finally arrested by the French revolutionaries, and brought by canal barge to Gravelines. All that belonged to them, their house and the little treasures they had accumulated over 150 years, were expropriated. Twice they were saved from death—first by the captain who told the bloodthirsty crew that he had “no orders to drown the ladies,” and secondly, from the guillotine, by the circumstance of Robespierre’s earlier demise. Their respite in gaol can have been made barely more tolerable for them by an old nun who insisted on playing a violin she had saved from the pillaged convent. But they got back.

The narrative this far was compiled by Dom Adam Hamilton, the historian of Buckfast. The rest of the book is culled from the diaries of the abbesses who subsequently ruled the community. The nuns are now accepted as a rather ordinary feature of the English landscape although some people may still be unable to understand the significance of the work of perpetual adoration which has replaced their educational activities of other days and which places them, in a phrase of Huysman’s recalled by D. B. Wyndham Lewis, among the lightning-conductors of human society. But it was not so, at first. Protestant children were kept away from the convent by stories of bloodhounds behind closed doors waiting to pounce on them. The nuns were publicly boycotted. A lady entering a railway compartment and seeing two of the nuns shouted: “Porter! Porter! Put me into another carriage, I cannot stay here,” and ran off as if she had been shot. Consideration came to them occasionally, however, from unexpected quarters. William IV and Queen Adelaide sent them one day a haunch of venison and on another a game pie; but the Queen showed her true feelings when she dismissed her head-cook when he became a convert.

A reading of this book leaves unanswered a question as to the relationship Dom Hamilton’s narrative bears to the actual documents on which he worked. It does not matter very much where all the pious *clichés* came from, but it is vital, when he mentions, as he does, practically every member of the community, that we should know whether he is telling us all that he knew about them. An introduction to the book indicates that “he had followed as literally as possible the original manuscript documents . . . so as to present the spirit of the exiles in its unalloyed state” and the resultant text suggests that whatever excitements the community experienced were generated from outside, which is another way of saying that the nuns were a uniformly placid lot,

utterly incapable themselves of fomenting disorder. That this is an unreasonable view is confirmed by Dom Patrick Nolan's *Irish Dames of Ypres* which appeared in 1908, about ten years after Dom Hamilton completed his narrative. Dom Nolan established that two at least of the ladies mentioned by Dom Hamilton, namely, Abbess Butler and Dame Ryan (pp. 25-31), far from living on terms of co-operative amity, could not stand each other. Dame Ryan, indeed, went so far as to declare that she could not save her soul under the Abbess. However, this will be straightened out in due course by the history students. Meanwhile, a warm welcome for a book that has had regard to the secular implications of the Gospel admonition to collect the fragments lest they be lost.

LEON O'BROIN

QUIXOTE IN CORNWALL

Look Towards the Sea, by Frank Baines (Eyre and Spottiswoode 21s).

THERE is something of Thomas Hardy about the author of this book, and something of James Stephens, but the pixies at the bottom of Mr. Baines's garden are Cornish pixies, and he wears his rue with a decided difference—his style is entirely his own and he can write of a shipwreck as only Conrad could in prose and Hopkins in verse. One feels whatever he is describing with an intensity which is shattering, whether it is the cauldron full of boiling lobsters, or the sinking of the *Mohecan*:

"You're boiling something alive," I screamed, and my voice broke with hysteria. "Stop it. Stop it immediately, or I shall tell my father. You're witches." And I burst into uncontrollable sobbing.

The author was five at the time. "'But Francis,' said my mother, 'that's how they're cooked,'" and his father said, "You don't have to eat them if you don't want to." His confidence in ultimate authority, founded upon goodness and justice, was shattered—"A light within me was extinguished."

The chapter entitled "*The Mohecan*" is one of the finest pieces of descriptive prose that the reviewer has ever read: it defies quotation, and those who look towards the sea will exult in its force and tautness. The vignettes of Cornish life recall the felicity of *Far from the Madding Crowd*:

On high days and holidays all our servants and hangers-on got it, and at Christmas the port flowed as freely in the kitchen as in the dining-room, as freely in the farmyard as the kitchen. During our first Christmas at Trenoweth the band and the choir visited us. They

were to go on to Trenance and to P'roustock. But they never got farther beyond our place than Trenoweth Mill. Jimmy Treadle dropped the trombone into the mill-race and followed it. The band wasted so much time fishing around after Jimmy they decided not to bother about P'roustock, and after he had emerged with the instrument and given a spirited *obbligato*, they all curled up in the ditch and went to sleep.

So vivid is Mr. Baines's picture of his childhood in Cornwall that it comes as quite a shock when we suddenly find ourselves confronted with him on the Rugger field at Oundle. He writes in a larger than life idiom which impinges on the memory like the paintings of Jack Yeats and Frank Brangwyn. His Mysterious People lack the charm of *The Crock of Gold* and Allingham's "little men," but his prose is as full of poetry and life as his characters, especially his father, are full of Heath-cliff-like energy and power. Mr. Baines's autobiography is written for our pleasure: Edward Martyn's Tulira Castle is no more impressive than his Trenoweth, and there is something of "dear Edward" in the pathetic plea, "I feel that if I hadn't had to go to school and bother with the stupid business of being educated I might have had a chance of getting somewhere. As it was, school imposed an implacable object to decent living, and I have never since managed to overcome entirely all the disadvantages of having gone there." Mr. Baines seeks still for the Holy Grail, and one can but hope that this is only the beginning of his saga. The London part of his book is sordid beyond description, but like James Joyce's Dublin, his London lives. The chapter on "Carmen" is a masterpiece, and the weird character of his father looms over the whole story like a *deus ex machina*.

WULSTAN PHILLIPSON

LANGUAGE AND WORSHIP

Living Languages in Catholic Worship, by Cyril Korolevsky, translated by Donald Attwater (Longmans 15s).

THE AUTHOR is a priest of the Byzantine rite, celebrating in Greek, Slavonic, Rumanian or Arabic as need arises: he is a Consultant of the Sacred Eastern Congregation, of the Commission for Eastern Liturgy and the Commission for the Codification of Eastern Canon Law. The book is a historical survey which has, throughout, a pastoral outlook. The first part of the book deals with the nearly two hundred million Christians of the East (including not a little of Eastern Europe) and while whole communities seem to have been exterminated by Communism, the author feels that when the reaction comes, it will be seen that the Faith has struck its roots so deep that thirty-five

years of atheist campaign has not dragged them up, and that then it may be practical to talk of the reunion of the separated oriental Christians with the one Church. For 1900 years the West did not *intervene* in the linguistic affairs of the East (which were unbelievably complicated), but Trent at least anathematised the idea that Mass *must* be everywhere celebrated in the vernacular, stressed the prestige of Latin, and held that changes would then be inopportune. Sometimes the author expresses an interesting opinion, as, for instance, that if Oriental rites are to survive in the United States, they will have to be authorised in English, for the younger generation no more understands Slavonic, can make nothing of Latin, and would pass to Protestantism or lapse altogether from religion. And he notes that in the West language and rite are local affairs; in the East, personal: thus, for instance, a Mozarabic priest can use his rite only in one chapel in Toledo; the Ambrosian rite is used only in the diocese of Milan and a few places that once belonged to it: the Eastern priest must use his rite wherever he is. As for the East, even if it is not renouncing its spiritual inheritance, and if it is willing to accept help from Russia, or in dollars, it certainly will not admit Europeanisation, of which Latin seems to it a part. Recognition of ancient rites like the Ethiopic seems gladly given; we read of a priest in Japan permitted to say Mass in Japanese. As for our West, we have indeed travelled far from the days when Alexander VI in 1661 prohibited the Missal to be translated for private reading—possible under pressure from France where Latin was “the touchstone of orthodoxy.” We may be surprised to read how much vernacular has for some considerable time been permitted in, notably, German and Austrian worship, or is asked for from, for example, Belgium to Portugal. Probably the American *Collectio Rituum*, used also in Canada and now granted to Australia is a transitional measure that cannot but be more widely used. This book, however, is not a plea for the greater use of the vernacular, though it indicates an undoubted trend. Mr. Attwater’s translation could not be bettered.

C. C. MARTINDALE

LAST OF A TRILOGY

On the Continent, by Osbert Sitwell (Macmillan 12s 6d).

THIS, the concluding volume of a trilogy, is a pungent recollection in verse form of the author’s childhood days in Florence. Against a poetically drawn Italian background jig the puppets, at once pathetic and ridiculous, of a typical—and largely British—expatriate colony. There are the misfits, male and female, the old maids, the retired colonels, the faded beauties with a past, the American-born contessas, all well-known types but observed with uncanny insight and delineated

with a wit which, sharp as it can be, is never lacking in compassion. Even those who have not had first-hand experience of English pensions abroad will read with joy of Mr. and Mrs. Dampier who, "incapable of running a home for themselves set out to run a home for twenty others, and be paid for it." Mr. Dampier supplied the culture and Mrs. D. ordered the meals—"the same pale tasteless food like something materialised by a medium at a seance." And then,

Most conveniently
Mrs. Dampier had trained as a nurse
And so could tend the cases
That arose from eating the dishes she provided.

And Miss Burtle, pronounced Bur-tell, who had "a rare gift for identification" and would shout "Hurrah, it's Shepherds Pie!" or "Hurray, it's Trifle!" as these delicacies appeared on the table. But highly enjoyable as these felicities are, and one is tempted to quote any number more, they are but the plums in the cake and should not of themselves be taken to indicate the true nature of this collection, which in essence is much more taken up with the theme of the mutability of life than with that of the joy of living. In one poem—"Old Angelo of the Posy Office"—there is a magical evocation of flowers, while in another—"Spring Dawn"—Sir Osbert shows that he is every bit as acutely aware of the working of an Italian peasant's mind as he is of his own compatriots. And that is saying quite a lot.

JOHN MCEWEN

SHORTER NOTICES

St. John and the Apocalypse, by C. C. Martindale, S.J. Second Edition (Sheed and Ward 12s 6d).

THAT the publishers should consider that this little book calls for a second edition is remarkable in itself; for the Apocalypse is notoriously the least read of all the books of Holy Scripture. Catholics tend to shy off from it, as they shy off from the Canticle of Canticles, though for a different reason; it is too *recherché*, not for simple folk, only for experts. In these days of tabloid newspapers, television and Bible-stories printed comic-strip fashion, the judgment seems apposite. What is difficult to assimilate is left untouched.

It is this challenge which Fr. Martindale positively runs to meet. He is a populariser in the best and truest sense of the word—a teacher of the people who never condescends but lifts up. "Expert scholarship for the non-expert . . . erudition carried so lightly as to be assimilable by

the reader wholly without tears." For once, a publishers' blurb rings true! Fr. Martindale forces us to appreciate the importance of knowing the religious and secular background against which St. John writes; he makes us see that it is often the local and national elements in John's imagery and symbolism which make mysteries for us across the gulf of time, place and race; that it is a good deal easier to understand than we expected. More than this, he catches our interest and awakens in us his own enthusiasm and excitement. And best of all, he imparts to us a little of his own love for and sympathy with his author. "The heart of John," he says, "like the heart of Paul, is great and glorious, and tender and yearning and human and full of God,"—an echo, we think, of John Chrysostom's "cor Pauli, cor Christi." It is not too much to say that Fr. Martindale here, as elsewhere, reveals a glimpse of the same apostolic spirit.

What Think You of Mary? by Patrick J. Gearon, O. Carm. (Burns and Oates 15s).

GOOD BOOKS about Our Blessed Lady are few and far between. We are naturally critical of spiritual literature on this subject, for our standards are set by Sts. Irenaeus, Ephraim, Epiphanius and Bernard—the Fathers, who were divinely assisted to combine exact theology with fervent love and true devotion. Hence, when one reads in the publishers' blurb of *What Think You of Mary?* that the book is "scintillating," "exceptional" and "profound," and "a veritable masterpiece," it is according to the highest standards that we are prepared to judge, and not according to those of present-day spiritual literature.

The book, however, can hardly be classed as spiritual theology; it is almost entirely one of devotional meditation. In his preface, the author accommodates to Our Blessed Lady one of St. Paul's most pregnant phrases, thus: "Each of us can say: 'She loved me and delivered herself for me.' When we realise all this. . . ." But nowhere in his book does he offer the *precise* theological knowledge which will enable the reader to realise it with his mind, as well as with his heart. Dr. Gearon has little to say on the theological significance of the spiritual Motherhood of Mary, and nowhere in his book does he treat of the wealth of meaning in the Johannine texts on Our Lady uncovered by scripture scholars in recent years.

As a devotional book we must welcome it, for Dr. Gearon writes with love and imagination; though this reviewer, for one, would like to see the line of Wordsworth, "Our tainted nature's solitary boast," given a decent burial; it is not only hackneyed, but theologically inaccurate.

St. Paul: The Apostle of the Gentiles, by Justo Pérez de Urbel. O.S.B., translated from the Spanish by Paul Barrett, O.F.M. Cap. (Elek Books 30s).

THE LAST two generations have witnessed a revival of attention, among Catholics, to the Scriptures, and not least to the writings of St. John and St. Paul, and consequently to the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ. Much of St. Paul's epistles may seem to lack actuality because of his controversy with Jews and Judaisers; but undoubtedly the use by the early Protestants of his doctrine of grace made Catholics almost frightened of him. A book like this one, however, is evidence that an intelligent public can be found willing to study St. Paul, for nothing can make the epistles altogether easy reading. Dom Justo skilfully interweaves them with St. Luke's brilliant narrative in *Acts*, and since his book is not meant to be a critical one, so neither should disputed points be minutely attended to in a review, such as his regarding *Galatians* the first surviving letter to be written. Still, we may regret that "Aphrodite Pandemos" should be again described as the patroness of lust at Corinth, for paradoxically it was the heavenly Aphrodite (Ourania) who went nearer deserving that stigma there: and a point is missed by translating the inscription at Athens "to the Unknown God" instead of using the indefinite article "an." We could wish that many apocryphal documents like the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* had not been alluded to at such length. They will, surely, confuse the unaccustomed reader, for what is wanted is a picture of the towering personality of St. Paul, unadorned by what, if mentioned, is to be forthwith laid aside. But the author does make us realise St. Paul's amazing vocation, and how he has in many ways moulded the mind of Europe for nearly two thousand years.

Athenian Democracy, by A. H. M. Jones (Blackwell 21s).

IN THIS VOLUME Professor Jones of Cambridge has collected four papers previously published in learned journals, and has added two unpublished articles to shed light on the workings of Athenian democracy in the fifth and fourth centuries. "The Economic Basis of the Athenian Democracy" demolishes the commonly-held view (dear especially to Marxian historians) that the fifth-century Athenians were a parasitic citizenry living off the sweat of their slaves and the money of their allies. "The Athens of Demosthenes" examines the economic hardships of the majority of fourth-century citizens and concludes that they were not so unpatriotic as Demosthenes claims. In "The Athenian Democracy and its Critics" is broached a topic recently treated by E. A. Havelock—a complaint at the absence of any treatise vindicating democratic policies at Athens; but these

arguments largely complement Havelock's. "The Social Structure of Athens in the Fourth Century B.C." is an interesting analysis of the social strata within the citizen-body; of 21,000 citizens, there was a heavy concentration of wealth in about 300 families, but amongst the greater number wealth was evenly distributed, which accounts for the rarity of revolutionary politics. "How did it work?" is an account of the powers and procedure of public boards and political bodies. Finally is added a most useful appendix on the size of the citizen-body at the end of the fifth century. There is such a paucity of economic analysis of Greece prior to the Hellenistic age that one must applaud the publisher for undertaking this publication. In spite of its technical content, the material is presented most attractively and lucidly.

The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, by Vladimir Lossky (Clarke 16s).

IT IS AS WELL that M. Lossky should say, in the second sentence of his introduction, that "in the present work, the term 'mystical theology' denotes no more than a spirituality which expresses a doctrinal attitude," since the title of his book, written specifically for Western readers, is most misleading. Though we deprecate as much as the author does the excessive "departmentalisation" which the later scholastics introduced into the theology of the West, and agree that "all theology is mystical inasmuch as it shows forth the divine mystery," precision of terminology is essential in the subtlest of all sciences. M. Lossky takes as his starting point the *Mystical Theology* of the Pseudo-Dionysius, who himself is responsible for the much narrower definition of the term *mystical* which has become current in East and West alike.

It is *Spiritual* Theology, and not *mystical*, which may be loosely defined as the application of the Christian dogma to the Christian life. But even were this title to be substituted, it would scarcely be a just title of this work. Speculatively, spiritual theology is largely indistinguishable from dogma; it belies its name unless it concerns itself with practice rather than with theory. It is precisely here that M. Lossky's work is so disappointing. He has nothing to say of prayer, for example, except very briefly towards the end of his book; and even here he spends overmuch time in polemics against PP. Jugie and Hausherr, who have few rivals today, either in the East or the West, in their knowledge of the Greek Fathers. One searches in vain in the index for references to Charity (which the Greek Fathers identified with Christian perfection) or to the doctrine of the *memoria Christi*, which St. Gregory Nazianzen spoke of as the breath of the Christian life, or to that Christian ascesis which the Greeks called "the martyrdom of the conscience."

However, if the Western Christian disregards the tendency to identify Western theology with the Aristotelianism of the Schools (the author speaks as though the scholastics' explanations of the Processions in the Trinity are accepted in the West as revealed truth), and the lengthy tendentious attempt to identify the basis of an allegedly specifically different Oriental spirituality with the rejection of the clause *filioque*, and concentrates on the riches of the Trinitarian Spirituality, of which the great Eastern Fathers write so forcefully and beautifully, and which is displayed in this book with striking effect, he will find how much he owes to and how much he may learn from the Eastern spiritual tradition.

Art and Reality, by Joyce Cary (Cambridge University Press 18s 6d).

THE Clark Lectures at Trinity College, Cambridge, delivered annually by eminent men of letters, have been responsible, of recent years, for some of our most stimulating criticism. The lecturer chosen for 1956 was Mr. Joyce Cary, whose death last spring deprived us of a novelist of talent, insight, and humour. A lucid exponent of the craft of fiction, Joyce Cary had also practised in his youth the painter's art, and loved them both. It seemed likely, then, that the theme of his lecture *Art and Reality* might have called forth a memorable wisdom from the horse's mouth.

That his words were something of a disappointment may have been due to the fatal illness which was daily gaining upon him (the lecture was, in fact, delivered by proxy). More probably, it might have resulted from Joyce Cary's lack of interest in general aesthetic and critical theory (he appears to have ignored all literature on his title theme after the writings of Bergson and Croce). This, of course, accorded well enough with his own alternating fictional approach—his distrust of abstract truth and his insistence upon each character's relativity of view-point.

Joyce Cary's exposition of his subject is clear, pragmatic, and down to earth. There is nothing strained or factitious in his thought—but, then, neither is there anything new. His lectures make for good sense and good prose—the product of a mind, calm, patient, and humane. Alas, that more should be required of the critic!

The Story of Mellifont, by Fr. Colmcille, O.C.S.O. (Gill 30s).

ALREADY in the early twelfth century, well before the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland, a native reform-movement was proceeding in the Irish church. As part of this movement St. Malachy of Armagh had several Irish clerics trained in the Cistercian way of life by St. Bernard of Clairvaux. These, with the help of a still greater number of French Cistercians, founded the abbey of Mellifont, near

Drogheda, about the year 1142. This was the first of the many Cistercian foundations which flourished in Ireland throughout the Middle Ages.

The Story of Mellifont provides readers with a scholarly history of the abbey. Its author, Fr. Colmcille, is a member of the community of the new Mellifont, founded in 1938, and situated close to the ruins of the old abbey, which had been dissolved by Henry VIII in 1540. Fr. Colmcille has compressed a vast amount of accurate learning into a comparatively small number of pages. His facts are all justified by bibliographical references or citation of original documents, and though it is perhaps a little difficult at times to see the wood for the trees, the trees themselves are fresh enough to give pleasure to the common reader, while they will of course be of immense value to the expert in ecclesiastical history. Disagreement, first between the Irish and their French co-founders, and later between the native Irish and their Anglo-Norman rulers, frequently disturbed the Benedictine peace of the Abbey. Fr. Colmcille is gentle towards both sides, trying to show how circumstances often rendered it difficult to decide which party to a dispute had most right on his side.

The Challenge of Bernadette, by Hugh Ross Williamson (Burns and Oates 10s 6d)

THIS BOOK is not just a re-telling of a thousand-times-told tale; the author insists on the "challenge" that Bernadette, who saw and heard Our Lady, provides. A challenge to whom? Huysmans said, to the Catholic who has gradually lost his faith along with his morals, and simply will not look at the evidence set before him. Mr. Ross Williamson adds, "to the 'comfortable' Catholic, guiltless, maybe, of grave sin, who has gone—for all I know—to Lourdes itself, but in whose ears Our Lady's cry for Penance has not echoed." But this is not a pessimist book. The Pyrenean background, with its scores of shrines, each with its special Madonna-legend, is described with special charm; the author wishes, too, to say the best for everyone concerned, even for Jacomet whom he thinks he has caught out in dishonesty (we have not space to discuss this here) and the lovable abbé Peyramale, who certainly dealt gruffly enough with Bernadette but kept his thunders and roarings for, we imagine, the over-devout quarry-men. But while we agree that Mère Vauzou, novice-mistress and then Superior General, was not the villain of the piece, we scarcely think that her treatment of Bernadette was wholly due to her "dissembling her love." Bernadette was irretrievably peasant and not at all *jeune fille comme il faut*, and even we, from our own youth, remember the "correctness" of well-brought up provincial young ladies—though not (even in

convents, without their moments of "gush"; and Mère Vauzou loved to work her way into souls and then remould them nearer to her own desire. The divine irony brought the aged nun to die at Lourdes and in the hour of her death she invoked the Lady who had appeared there to Bernadette long since gone to the heaven where alone happiness had been promised her.

The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, by Etienne Gilson with a Catalogue of St. Thomas's Works by I. T. Eschmann, O.P. Translated by L. K. Shook, C.S.B. (Gollancz 42s).

THIS BOOK is a translation of the fifth and last edition (1948) of *Le Thomisme*. Less sparkling than Professor Gilson's famous Gifford Lectures, published in 1936 as *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, this is still an immensely valuable book. It will be an indispensable work of reference and its value is enhanced by the numerous citations, in the Notes, of important articles and by Fr. Eschmann's scholarly catalogue of St. Thomas's works, together with a brief account of their subject-matter, origin and textual history. Apart from some oddities in philosophical terminology and other occasional obscurities, the translator has performed his difficult task well.

Questions of Precedence, by François Mauriac, translated by Gerard Hopkins (Eyre and Spottiswoode 12s 6d).

ENGLISH READERS of M. Mauriac's novels have been heard to complain of the lack of happy endings to almost all of them. This, as a complaint merely, may stand, although it has no relevance as a criticism. Were M. Mauriac to reply to it he would no doubt emphasise in the first place the fact that he was a realist whose efforts were directed, not just to the telling of a story, but to placing it firmly within the setting of his own experience and knowledge. In this respect, and not least in this particular book, he has much in common with Flaubert. And in the second place he might say, as he does in fact here, that no story ever has an ending.

This book is an early example of the master's work—it was first published in 1921—and although for sheer narrative power it holds its own with the best, it displays a certain exaggeration, almost savage, in the delineation of some characters, which detracts from the balance of the structure as a whole. Of this the author seems to have been aware, as in a preface to a later edition he says: "I think if I were writing it today, I should treat my characters with greater kindness." The theme of the novel is the snobbery of the rich wine-merchant families in a provincial town (Bordeaux) as seen through the eyes of a young man of lesser social rank who is accepted as a member of the privileged caste

owing to the fact that his good-looking sister marries into it. She, however, who is a heartless jade, no sooner achieves her ambition than she begins to pine for a scruffy youth of doubtful antecedents whom, before her marriage, she had used in a most unscrupulous way to attain to her present position. Years later, at her urgent request, this youth—now an unattractive elderly man—is brought into her life again and she cannot bear the sight of him. It is difficult to feel much sympathy with a heroine who is so determinedly set upon her own destruction, while most of the subsidiary characters, as has already been said, are crudely drawn caricatures. But the pre-1914 background of the city itself is drawn with that uncanny skill of which M. Mauriac alone among modern writers has the secret. Mr. Hopkins's translation is, as always, masterly.

The Russians in Ethiopia, by Czeslaw Jeśman (Chatto and Windus 25s).
The Sicilian Vespers, by Steven Runciman (Cambridge University Press 27s 6d).

THE KERNEL of Mr. Jeśman's book is the story of a Russian expedition into Ethiopia which lasted for about the first two months of 1888. The French quickly made an end of this enterprise which thereupon became farcical. Russian authority denied all knowledge of it and punished (very lightly) the Cossack Ashinov and Paissi, a monk from Mount Athos, who led the expedition and who alleged that they had hoped to unite the Russian Orthodox church with the Ethiopian Monophysites. The author considers that the origin of this enterprise was a Russian minority almost mystically convinced that Russia was to be the world-power colonising not only the East, near or far, but also Africa. France, however, wanted herself to possess Africa, Italy being a smaller interference and Britain the major one. No one seems to have given much thought to the Africans. This is indeed an "Essay in Futility" and also, in tragic diplomatic and political intrigue.

It would be very helpful if readers of Sir Steven's book had read beforehand his three-volume *History of the Crusades*, especially as *The Vespers* themselves do not occur till page 214 of this "History of the Mediterranean World in the later Thirteenth Century." The jacket says that the book is "almost a connected Who's Who" of all the political figures in Dante: it might have said, of all involved in the power-politics of a disintegrating society, whether eastern or western. Sir Steven sees the distant vision of a supernational unity governed by a temporal and a spiritual head as having turned merely into a would-be papal theocracy. This was why the Holy See, after the death of Frederick *Stupor Mundi* threw itself on to the side of Charles of Anjou who proposed to subjugate Constantinople and reunite the schismatic

churches with Rome. But without the vast bribes of Byzantine gold, Charles's plan might not have collapsed and, with it, thinks the author, the whole Hildebrandine vision. This map of a political network, glitteringly drawn, is of course no picture of the world of average men, let alone of contemporary saints.

The Steadfast Man: A Life of St. Patrick, by Paul Gallico (Michael Joseph 12s 6d).

THE BRILLIANCE of Mr. Gallico as a novelist and the scantiness of information about St. Patrick might tempt us to think that this book would be little more than a historical romance. Mr. Gallico most certainly does not intend that it should be so. His bibliography is very full and shows that he has followed more than the usual lines of research. He does not profess to solve the obvious enigmas, e.g. Patrick's birthplace, or when and by whom he was consecrated bishop. We know that his grandfather was a priest, his father a deacon; that he was technically, no doubt, a Christian but lived in practical indifference, until at about sixteen he was carried off by raiders into Ireland. During six years of slavery there, he returned to God, escaped across the Channel into Gaul. An interval of years remains, after which he returned home but felt more strongly than ever that his vocation was to the "barbaric" Irish. Though Patrick becomes enveloped in legends, we need not fear that his personality has vanished: it is visible in his "Confession"—which does not mean a list of sins, any more than St. Augustine's *Confessions* do: they are "Acknowledgments," which include gratitude, praise, spiritual intuitions. And through the far from literary document emerge hints of his "mystical" life: he hears voices that are both above him and within him, reminding us almost rather of St. Bernadette's than of Joan of Arc's. The legends are sometimes charming and full of poetry; at others, banal or brutal: Mr. Gallico give us evidence of the grand if barbaric way of life in Ireland that the Romanised Patrick continued to dislike—he was always an exile in the country on which he left so astounding an imprint. The best predecessor with whom to compare him is St. Martin, for there were Christian settlements in Ireland before Patrick came there (we leave aside the problem of the *two* Patricks). The "jacket" (a clean-shaven man in yellow trousers and cape) is not likely to inaugurate a new sort of pious statue, though we rather wish it might.

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ONE of the great occupational risks of business life under the pressure of to-day is that the practical man of affairs neglects his outside reading, and all too easily falls into a narrow circle of immediate preoccupations. There is always loss in this, and the Catholic business or professional man, as a member of the Church Universal, has a particularly strong reason for keeping his mind open to wider horizons. Certainly it was never more necessary than now to follow world happenings. A direct chain of causes and effects ties every business to economical changes in the world, which are themselves as often the consequence as the cause of changes in men's political and social ideas. These ideas in their turn come out of the religions, or irreligions, of contemporary man.

In many countries the Catholic Church is at the heart of the battle of ideas. Cardinal Manning's saying that "all great quarrels between men are at bottom theological" suggests that there is, in fact, no better starting-point or background for understanding the modern world than a Catholic one. Because of this approach and background

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The summer number may be said to be privileged. For we are to publish a new poem by Siegfried Sassoon. It is his first poem as a Catholic, a longish, meditative poem holding the gem of Catholic truth and happiness with the discreet intimacy which has always been Mr. Sassoon's distinguishing strength. We offer, too, a long article by Père Dubarle, philosopher and Biblical critic, on the opening chapters of Genesis. This article is already recognized, in its French original, as grasping the real nettle of Genesis, which may be taken in hand only by an intrepid and sober mind. Dom Ralph Russell gives us the fruit of some valuable research on the Ascension as originally understood and as expressed, for him who can read it, in the sacred text. Not so much an event on its own, the Ascension forms, with the Resurrection, a single triumph of the glorious Christ. But it is above all from the Abbey of Maria Laach that the vision of the glorious Christ has been given once again to our time, and we conclude the number with an article on the mystery-presence theology of Dom Odo Casel. The article is by Dom Neunheuser of Maria Laach.

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